GIFTS OF SACRED WONDER

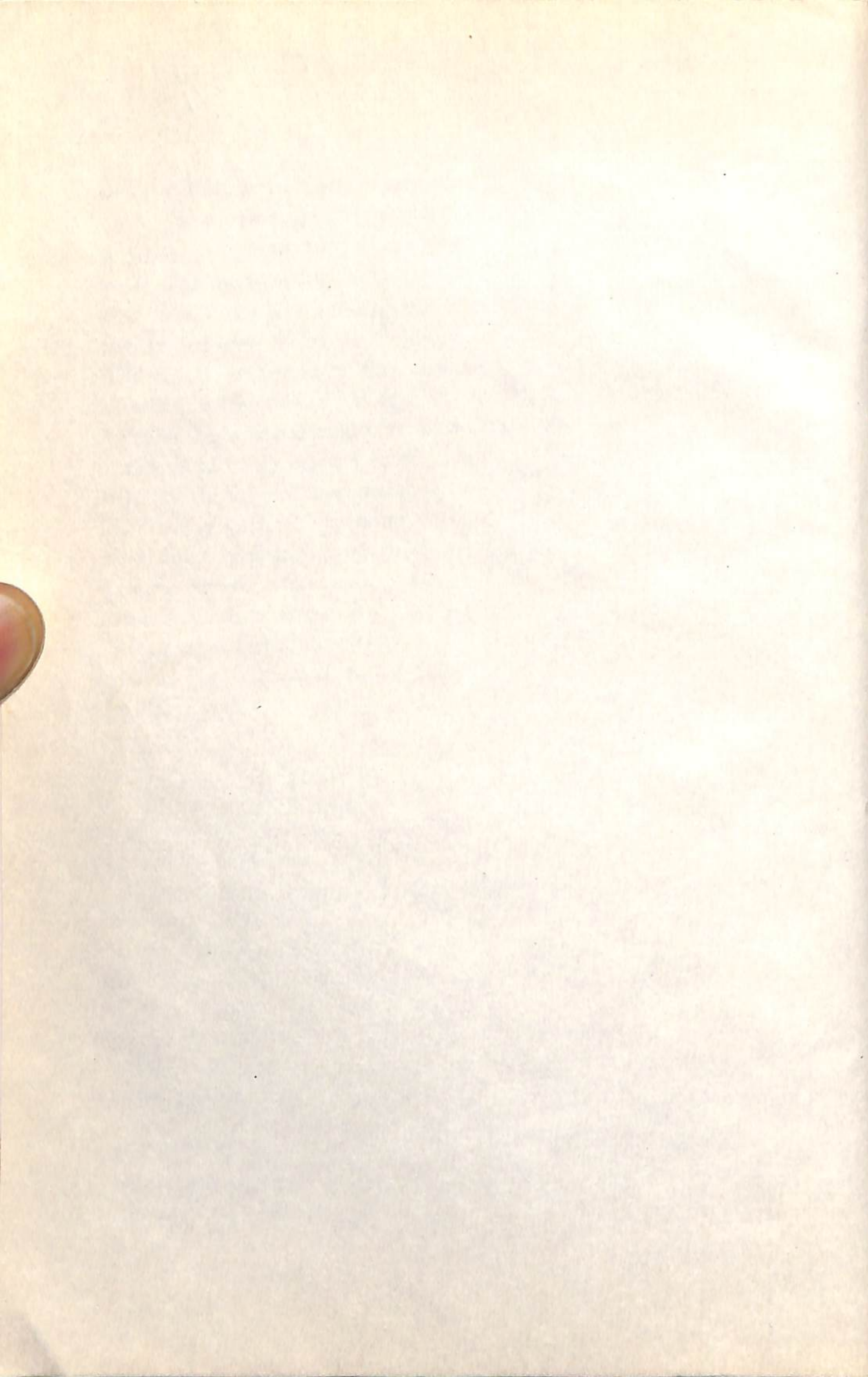
EDITED BY

NEAL DELMONICO

Gifts of Sacred Wonder is a collection of essays on various aspects of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism by a group of independent, western-born Vaiṣṇavas. The purpose for collecting these essays is to honor the five-hundredth anniversary of the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The essays presented in this volume are not merely expressions of faith in a set of religious beliefs. They are attempts by members of the tradition to study aspects of the tradition not often discussed in other works on the subject. Each essay expresses a point of view which may differ radically from those of the other essays. No effort has been made to conjure up a unified code of doctrine. What is revealed in this book is a healthy variety of opinion and outlook among modern members of the Vaiṣṇava tradition which defies all attempts at facile reconciliation. The essays presented here, however, by no means exhaust the various 'schools of thought' which make up modern Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism.

Another important aspect of these essays is the fact that all are by westerners. These are westerners reflecting on a religious tradition which is culturally alien to them yet which, in some manner, has exerted a tremendous power of attraction over them. All of these contributors have been serious enough about their interest in and attraction to Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism to learn Bengali and Sanskrit in order to make a deep and direct study of the texts of this tradition. In this way, the book contains an interesting sample of 'primary' texts which will be of interest to those who wish to study

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"I should believe only in a God
who understood how to dance."

– Nietzsche's Zarathustra

GIFTS OF SACRED WONDER

Essays in Honor of The Five-hundredth Anniversary of the Appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Edited by

Neal Delmonico

(Nitāi Dās)

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The Illustration

Between pages 92 and 93 is a foldout print of a painting of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the eight chief *sakhīs* (girlfriends) of the divine couple. These eight girlfriends are known as the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* (see Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās's essay for a discussion of the *sakhīs*). Seated below the eight chief *sakhīs* are the *mañjarīs.* They belong to the class of *sakhīs* called *priya-narma-sakhīs* (dear friends in amusement). Because they are at once friends and servants of Rādhā, they are admitted into even the most confidential *līlās* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The original painting was done by Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās who, for the last several years, has been painting pictures of the various *līlās* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Several of his paintings were planned for this volume but because of unforeseen difficulties they had to be excluded. Those interested in seeing some of his other paintings may contact him at Śrī Śrī Gadāi Gaurāṅga Kuñja, Śrī Māyāpur Ghāṭ, Śrī Māyāpur, Dt. Nadia, West Bengal, India.

Dedicated to

SWĀMI A. C. BHAKTIVEDĀNTA PRABHUPĀDA
who awakened us from our intoxicated slumbers

and to

ŚRĪ LALITĀ PRASĀDA ṬHĀKURA,
ŚRĪ KIŚORĪKIŚORĀNANDA BĀBĀ

and

ŚRĪ NIKUÑJA GOPĀLA GOSVĀMIN,
who gave us our spiritual identities.

PREFACE

This book is, hopefully, the first of several cooperative efforts in the field of what might be called Vaiṣṇava theology. By theology, however, I mean theology in the widest possible sense, i. e. the divine represented in language. Our efforts will extend, I hope, to Vaiṣṇava literature, poetics, psychology, practice and ritual in addition to philosophy. All of these areas make up the composite known as modern Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism. We wish jointly to publish careful, critical editions and English translations of important but rare Vaiṣṇava texts. There is a great deal to do in this area. Many of these texts are out of print and have long been unavailable while those that are available are often poorly edited and translated. It is hard to tell whether such publications are services or disservices to Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism.

Certainly, there is a great deal of work to be done in the field of Vaiṣṇava theology in the stricter sense of the word. Numerous theologies are waiting to be written: a theology of the holy name, a theology of divine personality, a theology of *rasa*, a theology of incarnation, etc. All of these are aspects or manifestations of the deity. Moreover, a systematic theology is needed to unite all these lesser theologies. Of help in this endeavor would be a survey and anthology of modern writers on Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism in Bengali, Hindi and English. While these writers are not trained theologians nor do they write theology, nevertheless some of them have done an extraordinary job of collecting and reflecting on the texts of the old masters. A conservative estimate sets their number at around thirty. A modern theology must make the old texts and commentaries its foundation. Theology, however, should advance the tradition by giving it a new shape and expression more suitable for

twentieth and twenty-first century minds. The Caitanya tradition appears to be stagnating in this respect. Though it is in no danger of extinction, what it needs now more than ever is some creative reflection; an encounter of the old with the new in such a way that the old is not compromised but rather allowed to evolve. For this purpose, an interaction between the Caitanya tradition and modern philosophy and theology is needed, along with creative minds who are willing to take some risks and exercise some boldness in this interaction. Hopefully, through future cooperative efforts like this book, such minds will be given the materials with which they may work and the opportunity to exercise their craft.

As important as theology is, however, in giving a structured rational expression to religious belief and experience, theology is severely limited in its ability to express the essence of religion, for religion is rooted, as are so many aspects of human life, in the non-rational. It is well known that a person can be confronted with logically flawless arguments in favor of or against some point and still remain unmoved because of not 'wanting to be convinced.' On the other hand, the flimsiest of arguments serve to convince others who want to be convinced. It is this 'wanting to be convinced' which represents the non-rational, experiential-emotional source of all forms of faith whether they be political, ideological, scientific or religious. One of the great Vaiṣṇava teachers, Rūpa Gosvāmin, has warned against trying to find a rational source for religious belief. Quoting the *Mahābhārata*, he says;

> Those things which are inconceivable can not be grasped by logic. The characteristic of the inconceivable is that it is beyond nature.[1]

To try to put this in modern terms; that which is beyond manner or typology (*prakṛti*) is not a part of our repertoire of concepts and is therefore not encompassed by logic. Such a thing is human behavior. This is not to contend that man is

1. B. r. s., 2. 5. 93.

not rational, but that some of the most interesting things that he does spring from his non-rational side. In Western philosophical history as well, some of the finest minds have been devoted to proving the logical necessity of the existence of god. The end result is always, however, a god that can not be worshiped, a god who can not inspire faith.

In Vaiṣṇava theology, too, the same problem arises. One of the finest theologians of the tradition. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin, begins his theological *magnum opus* the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbha*, by stating that the only means of knowing the divine is *śāstra*, the sacred scripture. In other words, he discredits perception and inference and appeals to the means of knowledge called authority (*śabda*), the highest authority in Hinduism being the Veda. Because of the vastness, difficult-to-understand nature and conflicting statements of the Veda, he argues, one must turn to the *Purāṇas* and *Itihāsas* (histories) to discover the meaning of the Veda. Among all these texts, the most mature is the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Thus, it is the supreme authority in matters of spiritual knowledge.[2] This argument, upon which is based the complex and well-reasoned theology of the rest of the work, presupposes a faith in the authority of the Veda and, derivatively, in that of the *Bhāgavata*. For those who lack that faith, as most Westerners do, the rest of the theology is a curious but meaningless museum piece. In the context of Hindu India, naturally, such a line of argument has more force because of the general belief in the authority of the Veda already present in the minds of the people. Nevertheless, the tenuousness of such argumentation and the need for a radical rethinking of Vaiṣṇava theology is evident.

More powerful, however, than theology in touching and changing the hearts of men is the literature of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism. A single poem is a more important vehicle of religious feeling and experience than thousands of pages of reasoned argument, for the reason that religious experience, like any ex-

2. Jīva Gosvāmin, *Tattva-sandarbha*, 10-18, pp. 10-29.

perience, can be communicated in language only indirectly. To this writer, the poetic and dramatic literature produced by the Caitanya tradition is the most important of its assets because there lies its real inspiration. It is through poetry and song that the Vaiṣṇava tradition has lived and continues to live. After all, Kṛṣṇa is the most beautiful of all males and Rādhā the most beautiful of females and their love the most beautiful of all loves. The repeated delectation through literature of their beauty and love was the substance of Mahāprabhu's personal religious experience, the source of his theomania. Thus, central importance should be given to this neglected side of the writings of the sect.

In addition to the intellectual and aesthetic endeavors outlined above, we would like to form a 'network' of Vaiṣṇavas, followers of the *rāgānuga* type of *bhakti*. Uniting this 'network' would be a monthly newsletter containing articles on various topics, translations of classic texts, poetry, art and news relating to happenings in the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava community around the world. The newsletter would be a source of information and guidance for those interested in the practice of *rāgānuga* by putting them in touch with others of similar interests. Naturally, those who have such recondite interests are, and shall always be, few. Nevertheless, some people by the inscrutable grace of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's joined form, Śrī Mahāprabhu, have conceived a desire to taste the *rasa* of eternal *līlā*. Perhaps our network, consisting of individuals with different gurus and different approaches to practice, will help them find, according to their own individual tastes, qualified and capable guidance. An individual's spiritual advancement can not be mass-produced in huge, factory-like organizations. Everyone has his own affinities and tastes even with respect to spiritual desire. The cultivation of these tastes, at least in Vaiṣṇavism, is the way of spiritual progress. As Zarathustra says:

> That however is to my taste: not good taste, not bad taste, but my taste, which I no longer conceal and of which I am no longer ashamed. 'This-is now my way: where is yours?'

> Thus I answered those who asked me 'the way.' For *the* way – does not exist ![3]

This does not mean that the guidance of and surrender to a guru is not needed, but that it must be according to personal taste, for person and personal relationship are the *sin qua non* of Mahāprabhu's Vaiṣṇavism.

With these hopes and aspirations set before me, I pray to my *guru-sakhī* and to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that this small book, an admittedly feeble and flawed first attempt, will bring pleasure to its readers, offend no one, inspire a sense of sacred wonder in all and lead to many better efforts in the future.

Rādhāṣṭamī *Nitāi Dās*
21-9-85
Śrī Vṛndāvana

3. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R. D. Hollingdale, Penguin Books, 1969, p. 213.

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INTRODUCTION

The collection of essays presented here is by an unusual group of individuals. All westerners, we are nevertheless adherents of the type of Vaiṣṇavism (worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) practiced and taught by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This in itself may not seem so unusual. What is unusual about us, however, is that we are indpendents. We do not belong to any big or wealthy religious organization or enjoy the security of any structured community. Our world is the larger, open-ended Vaiṣṇava world, a world of diversity of opinion, text and practice. As individuals belonging to that world, each with a different guru, our outlooks often differ. Therefore, one will not necessarily find in the essays that follow a systematic consistency. Nevertheless, though we may differ on specific points, we share a great deal of beliefs and attitudes, and this is what makes us into a group. By joining together in the endeavour of writing this book, we have agreed to allow each other to disagree.

There is, however, another way in which we form a group. All of the contributors to this book are ex-members of Iskcon (the International Society for Krishna Consciousness). We left that organization for a variety of reasons, some of which will perhaps become evident from the essays that follow. What is unique about us is that giving up Iskcon has not meant giving up Mahāprabhu. We continue to worship and to meditate. Our desires still center around entering and finding a home in the eternal Vṛndāvana and/or the eternal Navadvīpa. The old faith has not been lost, rather it has gained strength.

This increase in faith and religious desire is no doubt due to the contact we had (and have) with advanced members of the Vaiṣṇava community at large, an association which was denied to us while we were members of Iskcon. Some of the

members of that community we have accepted as our gurus, or rather, it is more appropriately said, some of them have accepted us as their disciples. Under their guidance we have continued and, in most cases, augmented our religious practices according to our own abilities. They have prevented us from sharing the fate of many other ex-Iskconers who, lacking any alternative, sank back into the quagmire of inauthenticity.[1] We are cooperating for the first time to make these offerings of our experiences, reflections and studies to the feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on the special occasion of the five-hundredth anniversary of his appearance.

As for our reasons for leaving Iskcon, this is not the place for an extended discussion nor is such a discussion necessarily desirable. That chapter of our personal histories is over. Nevertheless, something must be said to satisfy the curiosity aroused in our readers. Some of us left Iskcon because we believe that it and its parent organization, the Gauḍīya Maṭh network, have no real disciplic succession. That is to say, the *mantras* they receive and give during initiation (*dīkṣā*) were not received from any line of gurus going back to Mahāprabhu or one of his associates. We believe Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, the founder of the Gauḍīya Maṭh (and therefore, his disciple, Bhaktivedānta Swāmi, the founder of Iskcon), never received *mantra* initiation, except perhaps in dream. Dream initiations, however, can not be considered any more valid than, say, the reception in dream of a doctorate degree from the Harvard University. Thus, in accordance with the text, *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te viphalā matāḥ,*[2] "*Mantras* which have no disciplic line are considered useless," we left Iskcon and sought empowered initiation into *mantra* elsewhere. Unless a *mantra* is empowered it is incapable of bringing the desired result, which in our case is entrance into Kṛṣṇa's eternal *līlā*.

1. By inauthenticity we do not mean Heidegger's inauthenticity. We mean the inauthenticity of the eternal living being forgetful of its eternal relationship and function with respect to Kṛṣṇa.
2. *Padma Purāṇa*, quoted in *Prameya-ratnāvalī*, 1. 5.

Some of us also were disturbed by the tendency in Iskcon, which had its source in Swāmi Bhaktivedānta, to belittle and cast aspersions on other Vaiṣṇavas (not to mention practitioners of other sects). This troubled us on two counts; first, it was an offence to the holy name (*nāmāparādha*)[3] and second, it indicated a serious contempt for other Vaiṣṇavas (*vaiṣṇava-vidveṣā*). In the second case, the great Vaiṣṇava theologian, Jīva Gosvāmin (16th cent.), recommends, *vaiṣṇava-vidveṣī cet parityājya eva*, "(a guru) who is contemptuous of Vaiṣṇavas should be rejected."[4] In the first case, the ultimate prescription is the same. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is endowed with all of his personal powers and is therefore effective in bringing about a spiritual purification and transformation in one who chants it. This results in his development of *kṛṣṇa-prema.*[5] The only thing that can prevent the holy name from having this effect is an offence to the holy name itself.[6] Thus, those of us who wished to cultivate the chanting of the holy name in all sincerity were forced to leave the offensive atmosphere of Iskcon for more favourable association. There are other reasons that motivated some of us, related to those above, such as the lack of *siddha-praṇālī* in Iskcon which is essential for the practice of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, but these will be discussed later, especially in Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās's essay.

Those of us who make up this small group faced the necessity of leaving Iskcon with great reluctance, for it meant leaving behind friends, important positions, comforts and a way of life to which we were accustomed. Nevertheless, our desire to do things through the proper and proven channels, our desire to have Kṛṣṇa, coupled with the fear of ultimately being deprived of the pleasure of his service, forced us to take a leap into unknown and uncertain futures. Our estimation, after some

3. H. b. v., 11. 521; *satāṁ nindā paramam aparādhaṁ vitanute.* Not only is this an offence to the holy name, it is the worst offence.
4. *Bhakti-sandarbha*, 238.
5. *Śikṣāṣṭakam*, 1, 2, and 6.
6. Manindranatha Guha, *Śrīman-nāmāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, p. 23.

ten years, is that the risk was worth it. For those of us who remain, the path to Vṛndāvana is now open. This does not mean that we have gotten there, by any means. It merely means that the way has been cleared of some major obstacles. The rest now is up to us.

It must not be denied, however, that Bhaktivedānta Swāmi has done us a great service, for it was he who brought the names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya to our lips for the first time. He dragged us out of lives that suffered from chronic meaninglessness and gave us new directions and hopes. For this we must always remain grateful to him, and we shall always regard him as our guru. Moreover, for those of us who had the good fortune of knowing him personally, his memory shall always abide in our hearts as a loving father and a dear friend. He is no longer with us, but it is our great hope that, in whatever dimension he might now be, he will understand what we have done and recognize it as the result of a desire which he himself instilled in us. May then the bitterness which he felt and expressed on the departures of some of us from Iskcon be replaced with the satisfaction of knowing that he has not failed with us, but rather, succeeded too well. We hope that the desire he kindled in us will continue to motivate us and, gradually, by his grace, grow stronger as we move along our respective paths.

Those who, however, contemplate doing what we have done should know that each of us has faced tremendous difficulties. We have all had to live under the poorest conditions in order to find and, then, learn from our gurus. These hardships have taken a heavy toll on our health. Yet, some of us have stuck it out, in spite of poor health, for up to ten years without returning to the West. Others, even now, want never to return to the West. Whatever the case may be, a certain amount of discomfort and austerity was and is unavoidable.

Another problem which we have faced has been the extreme conservatism of the Vaiṣṇava, especially the practicing Vaiṣṇava, community. Most Vaiṣṇava *bābās* (renunciates) look at us

westerners with distaste and are very reluctant to allow us to become full members of their community. The problem centers around a purely subjective and cultural conception of ritual and physical purity, which is held by the more conservative members of the Vaiṣṇava community. They look at our personal habits with horror and prefer to keep us at distance. We, for instance, use toilet paper and do not change our clothes before or after going to the bathroom. We prefer to use spoons and forks rather than our hands, and when we do use our hands we may use either of them. Seeing these habits, some Vaiṣṇavas are convinced that we are impure, and since we have no caste, naturally we are, in their eyes, outcastes.[7]

But what constitutes the 'pure' habits of the Vaiṣṇavas? Seeing them pass stool and urine on the streets and in the fields and then wipe themselves with their bare hands, a westerner can not help but feel disgust. To complete his purification the Vaiṣṇava will rub himself with mud, the epitome of impurity to a westerner, and then bathe in a pond filled with stagnant water or a river with all kinds of floating refuse in it. Then the Vaiṣṇava will think 'I am now pure' and blink. To eat with one's hands, to pick one's nose or empty it on to the street, to spit on the street, these are all uncultured and unclean habits to us westerners.

What we have here is a conflict of cultural conceptions of cleanliness and purity. It is not our purpose to argue which is better. What we lament is the total lack of self-consciousness among some of the members of the Vaiṣṇava community. They feel that what they do has been done since time immemorial and is the only right way of doing things. There is no awareness of the subjective nature, or, on a larger scale, of the cultural nature, of these practices and attitudes. That someone else does things differently and that their ways may not be so bad is absurd to them. Somehow, these largely

7. A *bābā* is a Vaiṣṇava renunciate who is supposed to be outside of society. As such, he too should have no caste.

external habits have gotten confused with the essence of Vaiṣṇavism and thus constitute the greatest barrier in the relationship between westerners interested in learning Vaiṣṇavism and members of the practicing Vaiṣṇava community.

Our suspicion is that *sadācāra* (the habits of purity in question) has become a justification for caste which has wormed its way into the Mahāprabhu's Vaiṣṇavism, a religious outlook that disregards caste. The proof of this is that even those among us who have mastered all the practices of *sadācāra* are nevertheless not allowed to touch the *āśrama* water or enter the kitchen. We still lack some mysterious quality of purity which only birth through womb of an Indian woman bestows. On the other hand, certain items which we are known to carry with us even if kept in the back pockets of our jeans seem never to become impure. For even if it passes through the hands of a polluted westerner, the most conservative Vaiṣṇava never refuses a dollar, no matter which hand it is offered with.

Fortunately, those on the highest levels of spiritual development are not like this. Their hearts, softened by the influence of *bhakti*, have broadened beyond the limits of these externals. They have liberally extended their grace and compassion to us. But for them, there would truly be no hope for us.

Language has been another barrier we have had to overcome. Most of the practicing members of the Vaiṣṇava community know little English. Therefore, all of us have had to learn the native languages, most often Bengali and sometimes Hindi. In addition, some of us have gone to the trouble of learning the classical language, Sanskrit. Nevertheless, as is often the case with obstacles, ours brought with them secret blessings. The difficulties we faced with the languages have worked to our benefit. Having a command over the native languages has naturally been a great help for us in conversing with Vaiṣṇavas and learning from them. Sanskrit, too, has opened the door to the study of the important texts of the Vaiṣṇava tradition. These things have, however, taken time. Even the conservatism of some sections of the Vaiṣṇava community has had the effect

of making us less dependent on that community and more self-supporting. The illnesses we faced reinforced and drove home the message that these bodies are temporary and destructible, and this lesson propelled us more forcefully into our studies and practices.

Many books have come out in honor of Mahāprabhu's fifth centenary. Some of them have been published by scholars and some by devotees. This book attempts to combine the two, scholarship and devotion. Scholarship and devotion should go hand in hand.[8] Unfortunately, one is often forfeited in favor of the other. Yet, the great devotees of the past have provided an example for us of how the two endeavors might be united.

One thing is true of all religions and especially of Caitanya's Vaiṣṇavism, and this is that they live through their 'word,' that is, their verbal expressions. Some scholars of religion have pointed out two aspects or dimensions of religion: religious experience and its expression.[9] Religion as experience lies always beyond the grasp of others. It is a personal and subjective thing. Only when expressed through language does that experience become available to others. In the process of expressing experience in language, however, it becomes generalized and loses its unique and individual character. Thus experience expressed and experience lived are always two different things. Nevertheless, it is only experience expressed which can be shared, which can be communicated and around which 'communities' form.

Scholarship deals with the various expressions of religious experience. It may be of two types: reconstruction and suspicion. Reconstruction is the effort to recover texts or parts of texts which were lost, garbled or changed by time. Suspicion

8. One of us had a debate with Swāmi Bhaktivedānta on this point. He insisted that the world needed more good devotees and not more good scholars. The implication is that a single person can not be both. We disagree and are trying to demonstrate that possibility through this book.

9. Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religions*.

attempts to distinguish the original from the late, the genuine from the fake. These two together are both preliminaries to and results of interpretation. This is the famous hermeneutic circle. In addition, these two endeavors, reconstruction and suspicion, are closely related to each other.

A scholar's understanding of a text will be influenced by the particular approach he uses. This approach may be termed his bias. If the scholar is a non-devotee he will have a particular bias, and if he is a devotee, he will have another bias. Thus it is perhaps wrong to oppose scholarship with devotion as if they were mutually exclusive. A devotee and a non-devotee may both use the same methods; they may apply reconstruction and suspicion to the religious expressions of a sect but, because of a difference in biases, arrive at different understandings. Should only the understanding of the non-devotee be considered scholarship? If, as Gadamer insists, biases are not deleterious to understanding but rather are ways of opening towards the world, then the meanings arrived at through different biases reveal different aspects of the object of study.[10] Biases always remain whether they are recognized or not. In this sense, the biases of the devotee 'open' him to his texts in different ways than do the biases of the non-devotee. Thus, the devotee-scholar has a unique access to the texts of his tradition and his interpretation deserves a place among the plurality of interpretations. In this way, we justify the addition of another book to the already plentiful flow of works in honor of Mahāprabhu.

What have we to offer in this volume? In this volume a number of brief theologies are presented. Jagadānanda Dās

10. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 9 ; "Prejudices are biases of our openness to the world. They are simply conditions whereby we experience something—whereby what we encounter says something to us. This formulation certainly does not mean that we are enclosed within a wall of prejudices and only let through the narrow portals those things that can produce a pass saying, 'Nothing new will be said here.' Instead we welcome just that guest who promises something new to our curiosity."

Bābā has given a theology of Gadādhara Paṇḍita, an intimate associate of Mahāprabhu and the fourth *tattva* (truth) in the Pañca Tattva (Five Truths). Along the way he has discussed the theology of Mahāprabhu and of Nityānanda. His mastery and use of the original texts, primarily the early biographies, provide a genuine contribution to our understanding of these enigmatic figures as they were perceived by the different biographers. Advaita Dās deals with the theology of Advaita Prabhu, an important but not widely discussed figure in Mahāprabhu's entourage. Advaita Prabhu is like a bass motif which pervades the whole Caitanya symphony but whose presence is too rarely noticed. Advaita Dās, coming in the disciplic succession from Advaita Prabhu, is correct in calling our attention to the life of Śrī Advaitācārya and the teachings that can be gleaned from it.

Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās's essay carries us to the very essence of Vaiṣṇava practice. Of the many instructions that Mahāprabhu gave during his lifetime, both verbal and by his example, which has been taken by the tradition to be his essential teaching? One of Mahāprabhu's major concerns was with *sādhya* (goal) and *sādhana* (means). It is on this topic that Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās writes, using references from the original texts and data from his own experience. Needless to say, he is a practitioner of the system he describes.

Nitāi Dās's essays are of a more historical, mundane sort. The first is an old paper he gave back in 1982 at the Bengal Studies Conference held at Harvard University. It has been somewhat reworked for the present volume. The Nietzsche material is new and, he hopes, of some value. Too few dialogues take place between the East and the West. More often than not, what occurs is a monologue. In this essay he has tried to lay a foundation for a more detailed study of this interesting practice of twenty-four hour meditation. His second essay is an attempt to deliniate the *rasa* theory of Śri Rūpa Gosvāmin on the basis of Śrī Rūpa's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*. *Rasa*, he has argued, is the Vaiṣṇava

religious experience par excellence. *Rasa* was the primary experience of Mahāprabhu; he experienced *rasa* in *kīrtana*, in poetry, in plays and eventually in the world at large (for example, when in Purī he mistook the ocean to be the Yamunā or the sand dunes to be Govardhana). A follower of Mahāprabhu also experiences *rasa* whether it be through *kīrtana*, through submersion in the inner world of his visualizations or sitting in a *sabhā* (meeting) listening to a reading of a Vaiṣṇava text. Thus, the dynamics of *rasa* as a religious experience are central to understanding Mahāprabhu's Vaiṣṇavism and to the practice of it. Rūpa's conception of *rasa* must be sharply distinguished from the purely aesthetic *rasa* of classical Sanskrit poetics. On the other hand, Rūpa's debts to those earlier theoreticians must be recognized. This topic of research represents Nitāi Dās's most recent work.

The name of the book might seem strange to some: *Gifts of Sacred Wonder*. It is an odd name to give a book on Śrī Mahāprabhu. The name comes out of what unites this set of essays. Sacred wonder pervades them all. The actions of Mahāprabhu worked a spell of wonder on his associates and followers. They found what he did and said to be otherworldly and enigmatic. They tried to understand him in various ways, and sometimes, as one can see in Jagadānanda Dās's essay, some of his actions were too much for the sensitivities of his followers. A whole episode has been either dropped or greatly altered. These writers, as representatives of their communities, were struggling with something at the limits of their powers of conception and yet which demanded concept. Their statements, at the very minimum, may be regarded as expressions of experiences of sacred wonder aroused by the personality of Mahāprabhu. It is this sacred wonder which indicates Śrī Caitanya's divinity. The identification of Mahāprabhu with Kṛṣṇa or of Advaitācārya with the combined form of Mahāviṣṇu and Śiva and all of the miraculous acts they performed can be believed or disbelieved. What can not be disbelieved is that these great personalities aroused a sacred wonder in

those they met and that this wonder underlies all the writings about them.

This wonder is at the very center of the Vaiṣṇava religious experience. Its Sanskrit and Bengali term is *camatkāra*. *Camatkāra* is a response which indicates a sudden expansion of awareness, a revelation of something which overpowers the mind and drives all else out of it. There are many kinds of *camatkāra*, but we have called this a 'sacred' *camatkāra*. It is not a *camatkāra* aroused by an experience of the wonders or beauties of nature or of great events or personalities, though these might be included within it. It is a response in a human being to confrontation by something beyond the natural world. Something, be it Power, the Wholly Other or the Sacred, captures one's full attention unexpectedly.[11] In the frantic search for a category in which to place the object of sacred wonder only the ancient stories of scripture or tradition help. Those old and revered episodes of the gods and goddesses, so far removed from everyday life, themselves inspiring a sacred wonder, however faint, suddenly provide the answer to an enigmatic confrontation, not in dream or trance, but on one's very doorstep. Thus, old stories provide an identification for the confronting Power, and it in turn reaffirms and re-empowers the old stories. Both are wrapped in the radiance of sacred wonder. Thus the essays of Jagadānanda Dās and Advaita Dās in this volume take on their importance.

This *camatkāra*, too, is the very root of the *rasa* experience, whether it be the *rasa* of the aestheticians or the divine *rasa* of the *bhakti* theorists.[12] The practice of *rāgānuga bhakti* constitutes the road to *rasa* and the *aṣṭakālīya* (eight-period) practice and *mañjarī-sādhana* provide inner conditions for the awakening of *rasa*. Thus the other essays in the volume find their place justified in sacred wonder.

11. The concept of the object of religion is Power in Van der Leeuw, the Wholly Other in Otto and the Sacred in Eliade.

12. For the mundane theory, see *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, 3. 2. For the *bhakti* theory, see *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindu*, 2. 1. 10.

Finally, it is through *camatkāra* that Vaiṣṇavism extends beyond the narrow limits of sectarianism to embrace a wider range of the experiences of men. Wonder is described in the Sanskrit aesthetic tradition as the expansion of the mind (*citta-vistāra*). One might think of it as a 'shaking of foundations' which sets the mind in motion in a new attempt to understand. Wonder exists on the borderland of the rational mind like a gateway that swings open onto the non-rational side of the life of man. It leads into the realms of imagination and intuition, into intense emotions like fear and love and into the realm of faith. Starting from a failure of rationality, a crack in that safe, familiar, understandable world, it opens up a space for new possibilities, perhaps, if the wonder is strong enough, even for the discovery of new worlds. Much might be said about wonder and its role in enriching the life of man. A whole phenomenology of wonder might be written, but this is not the place for that endeavor. Here, we only want to say that Mahāprabhu's life bestowed many gifts of wonder and was spent in exploring the depths of wonder. A similar thing might be said of other religious faiths and rightfully so, but in Mahāprabhu there was an overflow, a flood of sacred wonder, and it is to this element of his religious presence that future historians of religions might point and say, 'this was his contribution.'

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Advaita Dās was born in Holland in the month of April, 1956. He joined the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (Iskcon) in 1978. In May 1982 he left Iskcon and received initiation from Nikuñja Gopāla Gosvāmin, a direct descendant of Śrī Advaita Ācārya through Kṛṣṇa Miśra. During his stay in India he has learned Bengali and Sanskrit and has translated several old texts into English.

Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās was born Peter David Tay on March 23 1951 in Long Beach, California. He studied Art at Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz, California. At the age of 18 he travelled overland from Europe to India. He went to Hrisikesh and studied yoga at the Śivānanda Āśrama there. He travelled extensively through India and lived for a while with a Saivite *sādhu* on a houseboat in Benares. Later, he went to Hawaii and practiced yoga in a cave on the Island of Mauii. He joined Iskcon in Hawaii under the influence of Siddhasvarūpa Swāmī and was initiated under the name Pāndu Dās in 1971. In 1974 he began painting pictures for the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust Art Department in Los Angeles. In 1980 he left Iskcon and received initiation from Lalitā Prasād Ṭhākura, the youngest son of Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. His name was changed to Gadādhar Prāṇ Dās at that time. He currently lives at Gadāi Gaurāṅga Kuñja, Māyāpur Ghāṭ, where he continues to paint. He has learned Bengali and has edited and published an edition of the *Nandīśvara-candrikā*. He is currently working on a book on the subject of *rāgānuga-bhajana*. The cover painting of this book was done by him.

Jagadānanda Dās Bābā was born Jan Kazimirz Bryzinski in February, 1950 in London. In September, 1970 he first came into contact with Iskcon through its books and started

chanting the *mahāmantra*. He joined Iskcon in October of that year. He was initiated as Hiraṇyagarbha Dās in 1971. In 1972 he became one of the first teachers at the Society's school, Gurukūla, in Dallas, Texas, where he taught Sanskrit. In 1975 he visited India for the annual Dola Yātrā Festival and remained, eventually becoming the headmaster of the Gurukūla at Māyāpura. In 1979 he received *sannyāsa* from Bhāvānanda Swāmī and in December of that year. Hiraṇyagarbha Swāmī left Iskcon, received initiation from Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura and became Jagadānanda Dās Bābā. During the years he lived in Nāvadvipa, he made a thorough study of Sanskrit, travelled widely in Bengal and lectured in Bengali on Vaiṣṇavism. His translation of Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Haṁsadūta* into English has recently been published. He has also done translations of the *Lalita-mādhava*, the *Vidagdha-mādhava* and an important modern book by Kuñja Bihārī Dās Bābā, the *Mañjarī-svarūpa-nirūpaṇa*, none of which have as yet been published.

Nitāi Dās was born Neal Delmonico in July, 1950, in Denver, Colorado. He attended the University of Colorado until December, 1969, when he joined the Boulder temple of Iskcon. He was initiated Nitāi Dās in Los Angeles in July, 1970. In March of 1971 he joined the Sanskrit Editorial Department of the Iskcon Press in Brooklyn, New York. In January, 1973, he became a member of the travelling secretarial staff of Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta as its Sanskrit editor. He travelled with Prabhupāda for two years and then settled down in Vṛndāvana. In August of 1976 he left Iskcon and received initiation from Kiśorīkiśorānanda Bābā (Tin Kuḍi Gosvāmī). Returning to the United States in November of 1976, he completed his Bachelor's degree (1979) at the University of Colorado in Religious Studies, his Masters Degree (1985) at the University of Chicago in South Asian Languages and Civilization, and is currently working on his doctorate thesis on the topic of Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇiḥ*.

THE ROLE OF ŚAKTI IN GAURA LĪLĀ: GADĀDHARA PAṆḌITA

JAGADĀNANDA DĀS BĀBĀ

Viśvambhara Miśra, then generally known as the scholar Nimāi, was suddenly and surprisingly accepted by a set of sober, educated and pious men as God incarnate. In a matter of months, he who had been not only the talented new protege of Navadvīpa's prestigious academic circle but its enfant terrible became equated with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *svayam-bhagavān*, of the Bhāgavata school.

According to Kavi Karṇapūra in his *Mahākāvya*, "The Lord, pacifier of the pains of the embodied, returned from Gayā at the end of the month of Pauṣa. Then, from the beginning of Māgha, he became absorbed in daily *kīrtana* with his devotees, displaying unique mystical wonders."[1]

From those cool winter nights until the end of the month of Māgha of the following year (1510 A. D.), Nimāi Paṇḍita attained religious super-stardom, something which he never lost. The intense mystical emotions that racked his mind and body became the inspiration of hundreds of poets, philosophers, musicians and artists. Countless devotees surrendered their very souls to his feet and wondered in amazement at what God had wrought for men in this form. Who and what was this amazing manifestation of humanity? Was it not one of superhumanity? For most of Bengal the answer very quickly became yes.

Although Nimāi became a devotee of Kṛṣṇa upon meeting his guru, Īśvara Purī, in Gayā, and though it was of Kṛṣṇa's name alone that he spoke or sang, and although it was Kṛṣṇa that he pined for, cried for and eventually sacrificed everything for, still he became identified with Kṛṣṇa in the minds of the devotees. How this took place is certainly worth examining.

Between 1513 and 1612 portraits of Mahāprabhu (Nimāi) were painted in ever increasing detail by several of his followers Seven biographies of the Lord have survived to the present.[2]

1. C. c. m. k., 4. 76, p. 133.
2. The author leaves out the *Gaurāṅga-vijaya* by Cūḍāmaṇi Dāsa which has survived in part and Govinda's *Kaḍacā*, the authenticity of which is doubted. (Ed.)

1. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛtam* (*Sanskrit*) Murāri Gupta (1535).
2. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta-mahākāvyam* (*Sanskrit*) by Kavi Karṇapūra (1542).
3. *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Bengali) by Vṛndāvana Dāsa Thākura (c. 1550).
4. *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala* (Bengali) by Jayānanda (c. 1560).
5. *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala* (B) by Locana Dāsa (c. 1572).
6. *Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭakam* (S) by Kavi Karṇapūra (1572).
7. *Sri Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (B) by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmin (1612).

These, plus a few scattered songs written by other contemporaries, provide the materials for understanding the life of Mahāprabhu.[3]

Though the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* was the most popular and widely read of Mahāprabhu's biographies, it was ultimately the philosophically consistent and aesthetically most pleasing Mahāprabhu of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that became the "official Mahāprabhu" for the centuries of devotees that followed.

In these two foremost works, the best parts of the other works are incorporated. They represent the first and second parts of Mahāprabhu's divine life, the external and internal aspect of his mysticism. There is an agreement everywhere that Gaurāṅga (Mahāprabhu) is Kṛṣṇa, but what kind of Kṛṣṇa is he? As the Six Gosvāmins honed the Gauḍīya philosophy in Vṛndāvana, these biographies had to show that Gaurāṅga was at the very highest pinnacle of spiritual status, i. e. the supreme person.

In the two pictures of Mahāprabhu presented by Vṛndāvana Dāsa and Kavirāja Gosvāmin, we find, in the first, one who willingly and almost in trance displays godly majesty and who demands his praises be sung. By contrast, in the second, we

3. The 'few scattered songs' referred to by the author number more than 1500. See the *Gaura-pada-taraṅginī* edited by Mṛṇāla Kānti Ghoṣa. (Ed.)

find a devotee to whom the idea of being identified with God is worse than poison. The consolidation of these two conflicting sides of Mahāprabhu's character was the work of the above writers (the Six Gosvāmins). It was concluded that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya (Mahāprabhu) is Kṛṣṇa himself come to relish his own devotional service. He was God come to taste love for himself and distribute it. The distribution was the external aspect of his life, and the internal aspect, the tasting. He was Kṛṣṇa, yet he was not Kṛṣṇa.

Wherever Kṛṣṇa goes he is both preceded and followed by his devotees who are called his eternal associates. Narottama Dāsa sang;

> "Those who were with Gaurāṅga
> are eternally perfected souls.
> One who knows this attains the company
> of the son of the King of Vraja."[4]

Rāma Dāsa Bābāji used to sing; *erā tārā, tārāi erā,*[5] "These here are those there, those there (in Vraja) are these here (in Navadvīpa)." There are not two separate *līlās* but one contiguous entity. Everyone who had been in Vṛndāvana remained in Navadvīpa which was simply Vṛndāvana somehow transformed for some inscrutable purpose.

Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmin, an associate of Gaurāṅga from the beginning of his manifestation who accompanied him through his *sannyāsa* life and who Vṛndāvana Dāsa says was foremost amongst renounced disciples,[6] was responsible for the first formulation of the Pañca Tattva.

Although the members of the Pañca Tattva, namely Śri Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Śri Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, were identified respectively as Kṛṣṇa himself, Balarāma, Sadāśiva or Mahāviṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa-śakti and Nārada Muni, the respective followers of each member

4. *Prārthanā*, verse 5, p. 20.
5. *Guru Kṛpār Dāna.*
6. *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Antya, 10. 41, p. 1087.

had different ideas and biases which were not fully worked out until after the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta.*

Kavi Karṇapūra's *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (written in 1576) is an attempt to equate each individual of Gaura-*līlā* with those of Vṛndāvana-*līlā*. There he states that he is writing what has been described by Svarūpa Dāmodara in his book, what different devotees of the three *maṇḍalas* (Gauḍa, Vraja, and Nīlācala) have opined and what he himself has been able to ascertain.

Svarūpa Dāmodara's view is this;

pañca-tattvātmakaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ bhakta-rūpa-svarūpakam
bhaktāvatāraṁ bhaktākhyaṁ namāmi bhakta-śaktikam

"I bow in reverence to Kṛṣṇa who is manifest completely in five *tattvas*. One is the form of a devotee, one the manifestation of a devotee, the third, the devotee incarnation, the fourth, a devotee, the fifth, the devotional energy." Of these the first is Mahāprabhu; the second and third are also Prabhus (masters), Nityānanda and Advaita; Śrīvāsa is the representative of unlimited devotees and Gadādhara of unlimited energies. All, however, in this *līlā*, follow Mahāprabhu, the supreme Lord, in adopting the guise of mortal devotees of Kṛṣṇa in this world.[7]

According to Kavirāja Gosvāmin in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Svarūpa Dāmodara wrote other verses in his *Kaḍacā* (which as yet remains undiscovered) in which Mahāprabhu was defined further as Kṛṣṇa covered by the *bhāva* or emotions and bodily lustre (*dyuti*) of Rādhā, the transformation of God's love and his pleasure potency. Where previously there had been two, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, now there was only one, Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.[8]

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, as the plenary manifestation of the godhead, containing in full both masculine and feminine dimensions, became the highest truth (*na caitanyāt kṛṣṇāt*

7. *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, 10-17.
8. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi, 1. 5.

jagati paratattvaṁ param iha).[9] Kavirāja Gosvāmin could exult in that discovery because his predecessors the Six Gosvāmins had developed a sound, philosophically consistent case for the supremacy of the divine pair, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, as the ultimate object of pure devotional worship. Equating Śrī Caitanya with both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa made him something more than just Kṛṣṇa alone.

In order to establish this *tattva* (principle), Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja had to reduce the importance of the Pañca Tattva altogether. His focus is exclusively on Mahāprabhu in his devotional aspect. Although it can be shown that Kavirāja Gosvāmin had a tendency to ornament the stories given by his predecessors about the master and had a penchant for the miraculous, still his descriptions of miraculous events decrease as Mahāprabhu becomes more fully involved with his devotional activities.[10]

For Kavirāja, Nityānanda, Advaita, Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa are predominantly involved in what he regards as the external features of Mahāprabhu's *līlā*. Nityānanda is busy saving the poor and lowly; Advaita is responsible for the Lord's descent to save the world; Śrīvāsa and Gadādhara are devotees whose mercy is a prerequisite for attaining Mahāprabhu's mercy.

Although Kavirāja Gosvāmin's book is accepted by all ranks of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, followers of a particular school of thought called Gaurāṅga-nāgara proceeded towards Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa through a somewhat different and perhaps more direct route.

If we examine Murāri Gupta's *Kaḍacā* we can get a good introduction to the first days of Mahāprabhu's *mahā-prakāśa* or great revelation of himself to the devotees of Navadvīpa. It should be pointed out that Murāri's Sanskrit poem, though used as an outline for all the following biographies, never achieved a major status itself as a devotional scripture. The printed edition was based on only two old manuscripts and no

9. C. c., Ādi 1. 3.
10. *Caitanya-caritrer Upādāna*, 2nd Ed., pp. 393-394.

others have been found.[11] Certain passages of Murāri's work were perhaps considered misleading and following authors changed his descriptions, when it suited them and their masters. Locana Dāsa and Karṇapūra both tell stories in which Murāri's ideological purity is put under suspicion. Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura has to come forward to defend Murāri's honor in the same way that he defended Nityānanda's.[12] "If anyone blasphemes Murāri Gupta even slighlty, he will not be saved even if he bathes in the Gaṅgā 10,000,000 times. I will destroy him through the Gaṇgā and the name." Yet Vṛndāvana Dāsa also rejected some of Murāri's versions of the Lord's *līlās*.

In the *Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭakam* Kavi Karṇapūra elaborates, on a story Murāri himself describes in seed form. According to Murāri, one day Mukunda Datta was accused before Mahāprabhu of reading *Yoga-vāśiṣṭha* and of being attached to the four-armed form of Viṣṇu rather than the two-armed form of Kṛṣṇa.[13] Karṇapūra tells the story pretty much in the same way except Murāri is also put into the accused box. Murāri also mentions that the Lord chastised him for singing songs of the *adhyātma-vādī* and told him to write verses about Kṛṣṇa.[14]

Karṇapūra's words are a bit more harsh. According to him, Mahāprabhu himself criticizes Murāri sharply saying; "The devotional flavour has found no status in Murāri's mind. Rather, it is filled with eagerness to accept the conceptions of *adhyātma-vāda*, which has a harsh smell like that of garlic. Even now, he still studies the *Vaśiṣṭha* regularly."[15]

Locana has also written a rather lengthy account of a story which is supposed to have taken place in Nimāi's early childhood when he was still a dust-covered, naked urchin playing in the streets of Navadvīpa. The story is not contained in Murāri's

11. K. c. c., 4th ed,, Intro., p. 1.
12. C. bh., Madhya, 10. 29-33.
13. K. c. c., 2. 4. 12-20.
14. *Ibid.*, 2. 4. 21-23.
15. C. c. n., ed. Rāmacandra Miśra, p. 34-35.

own book (though he has included many other incidents concerning himself and the Lord). There is no indication of where Locana gathered this story, but perhaps it reflects a general commentary on Murāri and his *Kaḍacā*.

The story goes like this.[16] Murāri was returning from the *paṇḍita-ṭolā* with a friend along one of Nadia's streets. The two were discussing the subject of their studies, the *Yoga-vaśiṣṭha*, when one of the many little children playing in the road suddenly began to imitate Murāri's gestures and speech in a mocking way. Murāri became angered by the cheeky urchin and tried to send him on his way.. Nimāi also displayed anger and said threateningly; "I'll show you at meal time."

Murāri returned home and becoming absorbed in his daily duties forgot the incident. Meanwhile Nimāi, dressed in a Bengali infant's Sunday best, his eyes highlighted with thick mascara, wearing pearl necklaces, silver ankle and waist bells, a tiger-tooth charm and a bright yellow silk cloth, made a sudden appearance in Murāri's house just as he sat down to his noonday repast. Nimāi said, "I have come. Don't get up; finish your meal." Smiling sweetly, the enchanting child walked over and, standing before him, passed urine on his rice while Murāri watched flabbergasted. As Murāri arose, understandably upset, Nimāi explained the conception of worship of the personal god, Kṛṣṇa, the lover of the *gopīs* (cowherd girls). At this Murāri became convinced of Nimāi's *avatāra*-hood and was filled with an other-worldly delight.

The truth of this story is doubted by more than one scholar. If its purpose is to demonstrate the infant Nimāi's divinity then it is certainly a strange effort. Were it true, it seems surprising the Murāri himself would not mention it.

Some of Murāri's philosophical sallies in his book are weak and smack of non-devotional ideas.[17] In one place Mahāprabhu even says; "If one has knowledge of undifferentiated

16. K. c. c., Intro., 3rd Ed., p. 8-10. Locana Dāsa, C. m., p. 66-69.
17. See K. c. c., 2. 4. 7-9; 2. 5. 27-28.

brahman, then everything becomes intelligible."[18] In another place Murāri writes that Mahāprabhu came to give' *brahma-svabhāva-bhagavad-bhajanāmṛtam.*[19] Nevertheless, devotion is predominant in the book. Of this, there can be no doubt.

When Mahāprabhu receives the *sannyāsa mantra* in a dream, he becomes distraught that he will have to give up the worship of his dear Lord Hari. Murāri tells him to interpret the *mantra* in a way favourable to his devotional frame of mind.[20] There are many other statements favourable to devotion throughout the book as well as indications that *madhura-rasa*, devotion in the mood of the *gopīs*, is the highest of all.

Murāri says that Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura told him to write about Mahāprabhu's *līlās* sometime relatively soon after the Lord had returned from Gayā.[21] He also blessed Murāri when the latter expressed the desire to write about Mahāprabhu's *līlās*. Śrīvāsa is represented as saying; "Whatever the doctor says will be true."[22]

Murāri nowhere says that Mahāprabhu identified him with Hanumān (though Mahāprabhu did write 'Rāma Dāsa' on his forehead after hearing his verses in praise of Rāma).[23] Vṛndāvana Dāsa equates him with Rāmacandra's monkey-servant, Hanumān, and this reputation stuck with Murāri.[24] In *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* he has also been identified as Hanumān.[25] In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is recounted that the Lord even tested Murāri's devotion to Rāma telling him to worship Kṛṣṇa, but his allegiance to his worshipable deity was unbreakable.[26] Kavi Karṇapūra saw him only as Hanumān, without providing

18. K. c. c., 2. 5. 26, *nirbheda-brahma-jñānād hi sarvam eva sulakṣaṇam.*
19. K. c. c., 3. 1. 5.
20. *Ibid.*, 3. 18. 5.
21. *Ibid.*, 1. 1. 8-13.
22. K. c. c., 3. 4. 26, *yad vadiṣyaty asau vaidyas tat susatyaṁ bhaviṣyati.*
23. K. c. c., 2. 7. 18.
24. C. bh., 2. 10. 14.
25. G. g. d., 91.
26. C. c., Antya, 4. 45.

any alternative identification as he did for others such as Acyutānanda.

Nevertheless, Murāri seems to have worshiped Mahāprabhu directly—in the mood of a *nadiyā-nāgarī* or woman of Navadvīpa. Not only Murāri, but a large group of Mahāprabhu's very first devotees talk of him as Kṛṣṇa; they are attracted to Mahāprabhu's beauty and charm.

His dancing in *kīrtana* was more than spiritually moving--it attracted the eyes of the maidens, too. The picture of Gaurāṅga in his *naṭa-vara-veśa*, the dress of the dancing actor, transformed the minds of even the men who saw him into those of women. Murāri gives his own description of Mahāprabhu in the *naṭa-veśa* in his book.[27] Narahari Sarkāra and his follower Locana Dāsa led the devotees of this sect. To them Nimāi's *sannyāsa* (renunciation) effectively ends their relationship with him, just as the relation of Kṛṣṇa with Vṛndāvana ended when he went to Mathurā. Though they may have gone to Purī to see him, they never returned satisfied. Seeing him in the fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa, paying back his debt to Rādhārāṇī, they found their own hearts tearing. They themselves remembered him the way they had seen him for that flickering moment in Navadvīpa when he was "the best of the dancers."

> Dances the Lord, purified golden Gorā,
> Without cessation, in every aspect full.
> His face is the orb of the moon.
> Is it not the pink lotus, that his eyes defeat,
> The irises of which are black as bees?
> As though upon an earth of gold the river of the gods flows,
> Tears of love wash upon his chest.[28]

Vāsudeva Ghoṣa and Narahari write of Gaurāṅga appearing to them in dreams and fulfilling their romantic desires for him:

> At the end of the night, I was still sleeping deep,
> When that playboy Gaura came and embraced me.

27. K, c. c., 2. 7. 4.
28. Mādhava Ghoṣa, *Gaura-pada-taraṅginī*, p. 103-4.

He gave a kiss upon my cheek.
He drank the juice of my lips with his.
My sleep broke and the man of the town was gone.
I had been unconscious, now consciousness came.
Ashamed, I left aside the room where I lie;
Vāsudeva Ghoṣa says; 'your love is a deception.'[29]

Vṛndāvana Dāsa's Comment on Nāgarī-bhāva

Worship of Gaurāṅga as a paramour, playboy, man-about-town or *nāgara* has been a point of controversy since the beginning of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava school. Vṛndāvana Dāsa, perhaps out of a desire to protect Mahāprabhu's character from possible or existent criticism, denies the validity of that worship in the *Ādikhaṇḍa* of the *Caitanya-bhāgavata.* There, in describing the prodigious scholar Nimāi's dauntless, polemic spirit and his chiding of his peers and elders alike, Vṛndāvana Dāsa states categorically that Nimāi's naughtiness never extended to the ladies, at whom he would not look even out of the corner of his eyes. Since he was indifferent to the association of the fair sex, those who are *mahā-mahimā* (of greatest repute) would never praise him by calling him a *nāgara.* Vṛndāvana admits; Gaurāṅga is God. Yes, he is Kṛṣṇa, and so, all types of praises of him are valid. Yet those who are intelligent worship him according to his mood and nature. In other words, if God has incarnated for the purpose of being worshiped, one should try to understand the nature of his mood and worship him accordingly. Then one will please him the most. If he is an avowed follower of abstemiousness then how can someone praise him by calling him a playboy and lover of the women of Navadvīpa.

Kṛṣṇa

Of course, if Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa, he has a right to all the *līlā* that Kṛṣṇa displayed. Kṛṣṇa, the god that Mahāprabhu

29. Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, G. p. t., p. 131.

himself worshiped, is the flickering and irresponsible charmer of the cowherd maids. The last word of the Six Gosvāmins is that the Lover of Rādhārāṇī is the ultimate object of worship;

Ataḥ sarvato'pi sāndrānanda-camatkāra-kāra-śrī-kṛṣṇa-prakāśe śrī-vṛndāvane'pi paramādbhuta-prakāśaḥ śrī rādhayā yugalitas tu śrī-kṛṣṇa iti.[30]

"Thus the ultimate object of worship (ascertained after progressive analysis through the first four *sandarbhas*, namely the *Tattva*, *Paramātma*, *Bhagavat* and *Kṛṣṇā*) is to be found in that place known as Vṛndāvana, which is the abode of the most intensely ecstatic and wonder-creating form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and where he remains eternally joined with Śrī Rādhā. This is God's most amazing (and therefore mystically satisfying) form."

The Gaurāṅga Nāgaras know this. But they feel they know it because they saw Kṛṣṇa in Gaurāṅga. Narahari says in his *Bhajanāmṛtam* that, by seeing him, all varieties of persons fell into an ocean of *prema*. They lost their demoniac propensities; in short, they attained feminine natures. Being enchanted by the emotional varieties and artistic nature of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, even dry Vedāntic scholars as well as materialistic and sensual persons would dance in a feminine mood. They became imbued with *gopī-bhāva* through watching the moods of Gadādhara Paṇḍita, what to speak of those who were already Vaiṣṇavas.[31]

Imitation of Kṛṣṇa-līlā

Acting out the lives and *līlās* of the different incarnations has always been part of the Hindu religious scene. In the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, it is mentioned as a duty for one initiated in *kṛṣṇa-mantra*.[32] If the purpose of devotional rules and regulations is to come to the point of remembering God, then such plays certainly help. That Nimāi and his devotee followers

30. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin, *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhaḥ*, p. 521.
31. Narahari Sarkāra, *Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-bhajanāmṛtam*, pp. 36-38.
32. H. b, v., 2. 159, *līlādyabhinayo hareḥ*.

performed plays is clear from all his biographies. There was one special incident at the house of Nimāi's maternal uncle, Candraśekhara Ācārya or Ācārya Ratna. With his different devotees, Gaurāṅga appeared differently no doubt. When Gadādhara and Narahari were present, one type of *līlā* was enacted, another when Nityānanda and his friends were present.

Let us look at Murāri's descriptions of some of these occasions.

Vastra-haraṇa-līlā[33]

"One evening after all bathing and worship duties had been completed the devotees assembled at the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita in hope of getting the Lord's association. The Lord embraced all his devotees and taking hold of them with his lotus hands he tumbled to the ground; he created an overwhelming wave of joy as he rose and began to dance with the gait of a lion.

'At one point in the dance, he suddenly took hold of Śrīvāsa's hand and led him far from the group of devotees. All these great servants of Lord Hari were no longer able to see him; they became disturbed and astonished. They searched everywhere but could not find him. The fully independent and unborn Lord, seeing them disturbed came and stood before them. They eagerly surrounded him on all sides. Then being overwhelmed by the fulness of the devotion born of the nature of the *gopīs* (*gopī-svabhāvāpta-samasta-bhaktyā*) and seeing him as the forest-flower-garlanded Kṛṣṇa, they prayed; 'May the supreme Lord (*maheśvara*) be merciful to me so that I may have *bhagavān* (the opulent and beautiful one) as my lover."[34] Then, that very same Kṛṣṇa being always true to his natural attraction for the devotional mood of the *gopīs* became filled with *rasa*. He made the desire of these surrendered devotees for the perfection of *gopī-bhāva* come true. He performed the *līlā* of the stealing of clothes (for which Kṛṣṇa is so notorious).

33. K. c. c., 2. 10. 10-19.
34. *Ibid.*, 2. 10. 14.

'Later, at some time in the late evening, he came, pulled at their clothes with his lotus hands and made his servants naked. He is the knower of *rasa* and the giver of *rasa* to mankind. Thus having made mere puppets[35] of them, he returned all their clothes to them in a moment. Having their clothes back, they all felt a thrill of joy along with the Lord Murāri.

'The Lord sang the names of Hari and danced along with them whose hearts were now in a normal state (of purity).[36] The Lord of effulgent golden color, who enjoys going from one diversion to another, thus destroyed the sins of the world."

Understandably, the authors who followed Murāri applied the censor's scissors to the above passage. The original Kṛṣṇa's naughty *līlās* with the *gopīs* have been a problem to explain from the start. Mahāprabhu gave respectability to what externally appears to be an immoral (to the tightly conservative *brāhmaṇa* community and other puritanical religionists) vignette in the *Bhāgavata* by taking *sannyāsa* (renunciation). The Vaiṣṇava philosophers (and others) have explained the faults of the extra-marital antics of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* in various ways. Gaurāṅga's *līlā* (to the agreement of everyone) was to taste and give the love of the *gopīs*, but is this the way he did it?

Other Writers

Kavi Karṇapūra, when tracing Murāri Gupta's steps, avoids mentioning anything about the *gopīs* in describing the same event. He even goes so far as to mention that Śrīvāsa is Nārada, implying that he is nowhere identified with Rādhā, and so the acted-out disappearance from the *rāsa* dance could not have any truth to it. There is no mention of stealing the clothes.[37]

Locana Dāsa's description of the same incident takes a rather startling turn. Eliminating any mention of the *gopīs*, Vṛndāvana or any relationship to the incidents from the *Bhāga-*

35. K. c. c., 2. 10. 17, *krīḍānaka.*
36. *Ibid.*, 2. 10. 18, *antaḥ-karaṇair yathārthaiḥ.*
37. C. c. m. k., 7. 59-63.

vata, he writes that when Nimāi disappeared suddenly from the assembly of devotees, Mother Śacī goes looking for her son, totally distraught. The Lord, always subject to the love of his eternal associates, came and put an end to her distress and that of all his other devotees. Locana doesn't mention any stealing of clothes, either.

Vṛndāvana Dāsa, though elaborately describing the prior event (the distribution of Nityānanda's *kaupin*) and the following one (the giving of Nityānanda's foot-bath water), leaves no trace of the departure into the mood of the *gopīs*.

Nevertheless, it is almost certain that the passage is no interpolation; neither can we say that Murāri has lied. Locana who almost literally translates most portions of Murāri's book is self-conscious of his rearrangement of the *lilā*, while Karṇapūra seems to want to brush it away. Yet Karṇapūra leaves some traces of what was there before the snipping of the censor's scissors.

The *Gaura-pada-taraṅginī* is an anthology of poets who wrote about Mahāprabhu, mostly in the Gaurāṅga Nāgara spirit. The foremost among them are the contemporaries and direct associates of the Lord, such as Narahari, Vāsudeva Ghoṣa and his brothers, Śivānanda Sena, and of course Murāri himself.

These poets all had immense attraction for Gaurāṅga's physical beauty as well as for his incomprehensible moods. His imitations of the *līlās* of Kṛṣṇa specially stuck in their minds. Sometimes he was in the mood of Rādhā and sometimes in the mood of Kṛṣṇa. These poets make no mention of six-armed or 'universal' forms (*viśva-rūpa*), nor do they touch on his being the savior of the world to any great extent. Their main interest was in expressing wonder at his amazing religious experiences;

Gaurāṅga was put on the horns of dilemma.
Absorbed in some feeling he calls out "Rādhā! Rādhā!"
Seeing the Gaṅgā he thinks "the Yamunā."
Seeing a flower garden, Vṛndāvana falls into his mind.

In his previous spirit he stood in three bends;
He wants his yellow cloth and flute.
Taking the dear Gadādhara to his side,
He asks: "Where were you? Where were you ?"
his words choked with emotion.
Understanding his mood, Gadādhara stands to his left.
Narahari Dāsa cannot understand these amusements.[38]

Vāsudeva Ghoṣa and the other poets show their best in *ākṣepānurāga*, *pūrva-rāga* and other moods which can be written from a purely subjective point of view, moods which require no practical fulfilment and therefore imply no controversy. Later on, to accommodate the wave of Gaura devotion, the system of singing the *Gaura-candrikā*, or *tad ucita-gaura*, prior to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlā* was introduced in order to instill the proper devotional mood by which Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* could be understood and enjoyed. Therefore, some artificial stories also had to be created; after all, Mahāprabhu didn't do everything that Kṛṣṇa did, though he certainly may have sung about it. Even so, in one *pada* (song) describing the appropriate mood of Gaurāṅga corresponding to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's swinging on a flower swing, Vāsudeva Ghoṣa states;

With Gadādhara the Lord has his sports,
Vāsudeva Ghoṣa is simply revealing them.

The indication here is that all of God's activities are eternal. Although Nimāi Paṇḍita became Gaura Hari and then later on Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, each phase of his life has its eternal state in some spiritual world. We also see Kṛṣna travel from Vṛndāvana to Mathurā and then to Dvārakā changing continuously through the acquisition of power and wealth – but the Gauḍīyas have zeroed in on Vṛndāvana as the most perfect of his eternal abodes. Kṛṣṇa spent at best fifteen years there in his manifest *līlā*, (most commentators say a little less than eleven), but because of its blissfulness it is considered the most perfect. The Gaurāṅga Nāgaras similarly saw the lightning flash of the

38. P. k. t., Song no. 2122, p. 227.

eternal abode, Vṛndāvana, in the sudden, impromptu involvement of Gaura and Gadādhara in that world. Narahari, Raghunandana and others followed them.

Although Vāsudeva Ghoṣa wrote many verses about most *līlās*, there were none about the *Vastra-haraṇa-līlā* (the stealing of the clothes) most probably because there is no separate Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlā* exclusively about it. Most singers include it in their performance of *rāsa-līlā*.

Gadādhara Paṇḍita as Rādhā

The first mention of *madhura-rasa* (the erotic devotional sentiment) in Murāri Gupta's *Kaḍacā* precedes the above mentioned incident of clothes-stealing as well as the arrival of Nityānanda. Murāri says that not long after Mahāprabhu's return from Gayā;

"Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one *brāhmaṇa* of a respectable family and a devotee of the highest calibre, would remain always in the most intimate association of the Lord. One night when he was with him, Mahāprabhu spoke these auspicious words; 'In the morning you should give this *prasāda* to the devotees!' Saying this, he gave the garlands decorating his body to Gadāi (Gadādhara).

'The next morning all the devotees came. Gadādhara then distributed the garland-*prasāda* to all of them according to Mahāprabhu's request.

'Everyday Gadādhara would bring sandalwood paste and make garlands which he would then place on the Lord. He would also prepare the Lord's bed and then sleep beside him.

'Now listen with faith to some nectarean words about Gadādhara. Just as previously, in Vṛndāvana, Rādhā prepared a flower bed for Kṛṣṇa in the jeweled forest pavilion and then slept with him drenched in love...."[39]

Kavi Karṇapūra's description of the same incident portrays Gadādhara as;

39. K. c. c., 2. 3. 10-17.

śrīmān gadādharo mahā-matir atyudāra-
śīlaḥ svabhāva-madhuraḥ bahu-śānta-mūrtiḥ,[40]

indicating that he was of a very sweet and beautiful disposition, cool, peaceful and generous. In this account, Gadādhara suggests that the *prasāda* garlands be distributed to the devotees. Otherwise Karṇapūra has followed Murāri closely with the exception that the broken reference comparing Gadādhara and Gaurāṅga to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa has been dropped along with its introductory enunciation of uniqueness.

Locana Dāsa, however, seized the opportunity to glorify Gadādhara almost as if this example of Murāri's is the foundation of the Gaurāṅga Nāgara School. Locana starts by saying that in previous incarnations, the Lord's different associates came and joined with him and that it is the same associates who appear with him again and again in different forms just as the Lord himself accepts different forms. So too, in this incarnation, these eternal devotees began to come to him. The first among them were Gadādhara and Narahari, of course.[41]

Locana's Version

According to Locana Dāsa, the scholar Gadādhara, the abode of all good qualities, would remain by the Lord, chanting his holy name. One night he was lying by the Lord's side when, seeing his eagerness, the Lord said to him; "In the morning, by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas, you shall attain a loving devotion rare in this world." He then took off the garland he was wearing and placed it around Gadādhara's neck.

In the morning all the devotees came to see the Lord. He spoke to them of the previous night's conversation. As he recounted his promise to Gadādhara, the Paṇḍita became overwhelmed with *prema* just by the sound of his words.

In a thrilled state he went to take his bath in the Gaṅgā.

40. C. c. m. k., 6. 12.
41. The only people mentioned before Gadādhara in the *Kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Second Prakrama, are Śacī, Śuklāmbara and Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, but Locana puts Gadādhara after Śacī.

Despite being almost immobilized by the divine feeling and the trembling of his body, he somehow managed to execute his worship duties to the *śālagrāma*. Then he came to worship the Lord again, directly. He anointed him with sandalwood paste, gave him garlands and offered prayers to him.

Gadādhara would regularly serve the Lord in this way. He would also prepare his resting place in the bedroom. There he would sleep at the Lord's feet, his mind always filled with faith and piety. The Lord would take great pleasure in Gadādhara's sweet words, hearing which he would take him by his hand off to dance in the *kīrtana*. He would place his other hand on Narahari's arm and they would dance in the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita in the mood of the *rāsa* dance (the circle dance of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*).

The devotees would see Gaura's form turn black like that of Kṛṣṇa and simultaneously Gadādhara would transform into Rādhārāṇī. Narahari became Madhumatī. Seeing this all the devotees called out the names of Hari (Haribol! Haribol!). Vṛndāvana manifested in that place; the son of Śacī (Mahāprabhu) began to enjoy his *līlā* just as he previously had done in the association of the cows and cowherd boys and girls. Those devotees had come again to help the Lord in this *līlā* of relishing *rasa*.

Śrī Raghunandana, as the new cupid, the one who is known as the transcendent erotic principle, as well as the other devotees began to reveal their previous forms, and one by one they joined the dancing. Seeing this, the associates from other incarnations began to cry, for the moon of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa) had appeared in Navadvīpa. Sometimes he would play his own *līlā* in the association of Gadādhara and sometimes the *līlā* would transform into that of Vṛndāvana where he enjoyed love with Rādhārāṇī. Seeing such amazing scenes all the devotees called out the names of Hari and loudly glorified the Lord.[42]

From this account we can see that Gaura and Gadādhara's

42. C. m., Madhya, pp. 129-130.

love had no physical consummation in their male bodies. Such consummation took place in another dimension of existence where they had transformed into the male and female forms of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā.[43]

Vṛndāvana Dāsa's Account

Vṛndāvana Dāsa like Locana Dāsa, was not an eyewitness of the happenings in Navadvīpa in 1510, not being born yet. Still, due to his intimacy with Nityānanda and the family of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura (whose grand nephew he was) he was able to gather a great deal of information about the Lord's life.

In his account, Gadādhara is one of the first devotees to see the Lord's amazing and, before then, completely unheard of symptoms of *prema* in the house of Śuklāmbara Brahmacārī. Not being invited to the meeting of the Lord with the Brahmacārī, Śrīvāsa and others, he hid within the house; Gadādhara became moved when the Lord tearfully explained to the devotees how he had seen Kṛṣṇa but then again lost him. As the Lord's anxiety and disturbed state became more and more intense, Gadādhara himself fainted.[44]

Advaita, at one point, went to perform some formal worship of Nimāi, but Gadādhara stopped him saying; "You shouldn't do this, Gosāi. He's just a young child."[45] Advaita answered; "You will see what sort of child this is soon enough." Gadādhara thought in amazement; "Perhaps the supreme Lord has incarnated, if the respected old scholar has such an idea."[46]

Vṛndāvana Dāsa gives an explanation of why Gadādhara would sleep with Gaurāṅga.

43. See H. M.Śiromaṇi, *Gadādhara Sandarbha* (1927), p. 29.

44. C. bh., Madhya, 1. 88.

45. In the *Advaita-prakāśa* (M.K. Ghosh's 3rd ed., p. 57) it is stated that Mahāprabhu and Gadādhara both were Advaita's students in Sāntipura for two years, studying Veda and the *Bhāgavata* respectively. This has no corroboration elsewhere and many scholars are suspicious of the A. p.

46. C. bh., Madhya, 2. 140-142.

One day Gadādhara was bringing pan leaves for Mahāprabhu. He came before him in a mood of great excitement. When the Lord saw him, he asked; "Where is my Kṛṣṇa in his yellow dress?"

Gadādhara was speechless. What could he answer? Seeing the Lord's anxiety and perplexity his own heart was torn apart. Gadādhara carefully said; "Kṛṣṇa is always resting in your heart." Upon hearing this the maddened Lord suddenly began to tear at his chest with his fingernails. Gadāi hurriedly took hold of his hands and tried to calm him down with a variety of pacifying statements. He said; "Kṛṣṇa is coming right now. Relax yourself." Nimāi's mother was watching the scene and became very pleased with Gadāi's expert handling of the difficult situation. She thought; "This mere child has been able to pacify him. Out of fear, I have been unable to even go near him." Aloud she said; "Dear child, stay always by Nimāi's side. Don't ever leave him to go anywhere else."[47]

According to some worshipers of Gaura-Gadādhara, this request of Śacī's was the reason for Rādhā's taking a male body. In one song written by Narottama Dāsa,[48] Rādhā is seen praying for a male body so she could remain with Kṛṣṇa without fear of elders and society. This desire had to find an avenue for fulfilment, and this took place in Gaurāṅga *līlā*. God is obliged to fulfil the wishes of all his devotees, what to speak of the foremost among all of them, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

The Play at the House of Candraśekharācārya

Nityānanda arrived in Navadvīpa some three or four months after Nimāi's return from Gayā. Śrīvāsa and Advaita Prabhu were already worshiping Mahāprabhu and a strong nucleus of devotees had formed. Nitāi (Nityānanda) was a brash and dominating, outspoken and unrestrained individual. He was wild and unbounded, and, often, innocent like a child. His

47. *Ibid.*, 2. 202-211.
48. Narottama Dāsa, *Prārthanā*, atirikta-pada, pp. 78-79.

mood was that of a cowherd boy of Vṛndāvana. Thus the imitation of Kṛṣṇa *līlā* continued with greater enthusiasm. Nitāi's dominance changed the nature of the *līlā*. He was soon recognized by everyone as Balarāma who had been Kṛṣṇa's older brother and Lakṣmaṇa who had accompanied Rāma. He was also identified with the ancient Saṅkarṣaṇa, the *ādivyūha* or first expansion of the supreme deity.

The play in Candraśekhara's house took place with all the Navadvīpa Vaiṣṇavas participating. The play was a big step in the development of Mahāprabhu's devotional life and the preaching of *rādhā-bhāva*. The incident is described extensively by all the biographers. As in the previous examples, there are some differences in the versions.

The first portion directly concerns Gadādhara Paṇḍita Gosvāmin and shows some more confusion about his identity. Significantly, Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, dressed as Nārada Muni, comes on stage first. Here is Murāri Gupta's version.

One day, the great Lord (*vibhu*), his moon-like face brightened with a smile, adorned himself in the beautiful dress of a woman and danced in the association of those most intimate with him. That best of the *brāhmaṇas*, the older brother of Śrīpati (Śrīvāsa), put on the dress of Nārada.

The seer of the Gods, Nārada, fell prostrate at the feet of the undefeated Lord. He said (to all); "Listen for a moment." Then, turning to Gadādhara, he said; "Oh Gopikā! Once long ago you met the sage Nārada and after paying respects, with your head and shoulders lowered, you said to him; 'I have given up the service of my father and mother so that I may attain to the service of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. You are an ocean of mercy, therefore please fulfil this desire.'

'Upon hearing these words the *muni* answered; 'Oh danseuse of the demigods! Take a bath in the pure waters of the river of the gods in the month of Māgha for one hundred years. Do this with single-minded devotion and you will surely attain Kṛṣṇa's service.' After the *muni* blessed you, you followed his instructions and attained birth in Gokula. You

acquired that most rare type of devotion, higher than any other, filled with the waves of the taste of love for God. That devotion which was glorified by Śukadeva in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (Uddhava's prayer to the *gopīs*);

vande nanda-vraja-strīṇāṁ pada-reṇum abhīkṣnaśaḥ,
yāsāṁ hari-kathodgītaṁ punāti bhuvana-trayam.[49]

'I worship the dust of the feet of the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana for their spontaneous song of the Lord purifies the three worlds.' (Śrīvāsa as Nārada continued) What can I say to properly glorify devotion? That *brāhmaṇa's* son, Ajāmila, committed all types of sins, yet when he left his body thinking only of his son, he traversed the uncrossable material ocean. What then of those who are dear servants of the ocean of mercy? They surely attain the abode of the Lord."

"As soon as the best of the *brāhmaṇas* finished speaking, all the devotees felt as if they had been drenched in an ocean of *prema*. They all felt divinely fulfilled and were very blissful."

The episode ends with the following verse;

yad-aṅghri-nakha-candrikā-kiraṇa-mātram etat vṛtaṁ
surendra-muni-puṅgavaiḥ sahacarair hi brahmādibhiḥ,
kṛtaṁ sakala-nirmalaṁ gopa-gopīnām amṛtais
tad-apsaraḥ-kathādikaṁ manuja-bhāvam eva sphuṭam.[50]

"The best among the sages and demigods, Brahmā, and others pray for a single moonray coming from the nails of the lotus feet of the Lord – and yet that Lord's human nature has been made obvious by this story of the *apsaras* and others which is purified by the ambrosia of the cowherd boys and girls."

Although stories of cursed and blessed demigods, *apsarases*, demons, humans and kings, are none too rare in Hindu mythology and especially in the *maṅgala* literature, presenting Gadādhara (or Rādhā for that matter, or any eternally perfect cowherd girl who is a direct energy of the Lord) as an *apsaras* is not satisfying to Vaiṣṇavas who know his glories.

49. *Bhāg.*, 10. 47. 63.
50. K. c. c., 2. 15. 19.

In another place,[51] Murāri mentions that after Nimāi Paṇḍita returned from East Bengal he found his first wife Lakṣmī had passed away. He consoled his mother with a story about how Lakṣmī had previously been an *apsaras* who Indra had cursed for missing a step. Thus she had taken birth, and now the term of her curse having expired, she had returned to the heavenly abode. Although Locana Dāsa follows the story practically verbatum in the *Caitanya-maṅgala*, to most devotees the story is not considered appropriate. How can a mere heavenly dancing girl attain the company of the supreme Lord, especially by Indra's curse? After dying, her return to heaven is hardly an elevation, but a step down from the association with supreme bliss.

Stories like this have been dealt with by different commentators in the same way that the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* tale of Droṇa and Dharā was by Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin. In the *Bhāgavata*, Parīkṣit inquires about the cause of Kṛṣṇa's stepfather and stepmother's (Nanda and Yaśodā's) good fortune. Śukadeva answered that previously Brahmā had given the austerity-withered Vasu couple, Droṇa and Dharā, a boon that the supreme Lord would become their son.[52] Kṛṣṇa was bound to his devotee's promise and thus appeared as their son when they were born as Nanda and Yaśodā. Later, Śukadeva says that neither Brahmā nor Śiva nor even the goddess of fortune could ever attain the same grace that Yaśodā did.[53] The explanation of this verse is that Brahmā has no power to give what he has no experience of. Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* is eternal; so are this associates, Nanda and Yaśodā. How a mere demigod can play such big role in the *līlā* of *svayam bhagavān* is the devotee's problem. The solution is that Droṇa and Dharā are portions (expansions of Nanda and Yaśodā) who take birth as demigods and later reintegrate into them again after receiving

51. K. c. c., 1. 12. 13-15.
52. *Bhāg*, 10. 8. 48-52.
53. *Ibid.*, 10. 9. 20.

their boon from Brahmā. The *apsaras* can be understood similarly.

There is another story in *Padma Purāṇa* of a Candrakānti, an *apsaras* who spends the whole night dancing before a deity of Kṛṣṇa to attain him as her exclusive lover.[54] Such a prize, however, is available to no one other than Rādhārāṇī and certainly is not available by even millions of baths in the Gaṅgā. Through such following of scriptural rules one can never reach the Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana, who is available only to the *rāgānuga* devotees. Therefore, according to Śrī Jīva, Rādhā's portion (expansion) appeared as Candrakānti, and she thus attained that kind of exclusiveness which is available only to Rādhā's *sakhīs*.[55] Śrī Rūpa gives her as an example of perfection in *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

In summary, although Murāri's story might have such an explanation, it is not something which would be dear to any devotee. Therefore Haridāsa Dāsa expressed bewilderment about the meaning of the word *apsaras*.[56] The last verse (*yad-aṅghri*) supports the idea that Murāri had some idea of the perfection of the Lord's *manuja-bhāva* (human-nature) and the story of the *apsaras* proves the glory of the *gopīs*. Nevertheless, only one of the later writers followed Murāri in describing this incident and that is the young Kavi Karṇapūra. According to him Śrīvāsa says;

"You went to Devarṣi Nārada, fell at his feet and said; 'I wish to remain serving my Lord's feet in the age of Kali'. In answer, the sage of the demigods said; 'Every Māgha you must bathe daily in the Gaṅgā. By such piety you will attain the lotus feet of your Lord. Oh beautiful-faced one! Don't you know that by this blessing you have become dear to the Lord in this birth?"[57]

Returning to Murāri's description of the play in Candraśe-

54. Quoted in B. r. s., 1. 4. 7-8. See also B. r. s., 1. 3. 14.
55. *Ibid.*, 1. 3. 14, *ṭīkā*.
56. K. c. c., 4th ed., Intro.
57. C. c. m. k., 11. 9. 10.

khara's house, the Lord first danced in the dress of Kṛṣṇa and he was accompanied by Nityānanda (Murāri calls him Balarāma) dressed as a *gopī*, who desired to taste some unique devotional mellow. "As he (Nityānanda) held the soft sapling hand of the lord of his life, his eyes rained tears drenching his body."[58] Then Mahāprabhu himself danced as a *gopī*. On that night in Candraśekhara's house, however, Mahāprabhu's mood changed. He took the mood of the mother-goddess Durgā and even took Haridāsa on his lap and breast-fed him. The dancing and acting, as well as the manifestations of divine opulence in his acceptance of the form of Durgā went on all night, leaving an indelible memory in the minds of all the devotees.

In the *Caitanya-maṅgala*, Locana Dāsa follows Murāri closely, but Nārada's speech is a little different. There, Nārada says to Gadādhara; "You are a *gopī*. I will speak to you of your previous lives. You are rare in this world! Listen carefully, for what I have to say is most amazing. Listen, for I will describe everyone's glories. Each one of you formerly took birth in Gokula. Giving up service to your own husbands, you served Kṛṣṇa constantly and thus attained the perfection of your choice, Vṛndāvana. You are the chief amongst the energies of the Lord. You are Rādhā. What do I know about how to glorify you? That no one knows. You are the foremost of womankind, the chief of Kṛṣṇa's beloved. You performed such devotion to him that no one can equal it; yet it is a secret in the three worlds...."[59] Balarāma's dancing in *gopī-bhāva* is omitted entirely.

Vṛndāvana Dāsa's description of the play is the longest and most enjoyable from the literary point of view. He depicts Nityānanda in the role of an old woman (the *baṛāi buṛī*) who supports the amours of her dependent heroine (Rādhā) in the plays of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Later, his role is divided

58. K. c. c., 2. 16. 6.
59. C. m., Madhya, pp. 176-179.

between Paurṇamāsī (who is the mother of Kṛṣṇa's guru, Sāndīpani, and is recognized as Yogamāyā herself) and the affectionate, nearsighted, intentionally bumbling Mukharā, Rādhā's grandmother. Gadādhara's role is also very pronounced and is described with feeling, though Vṛndāvana Dāsa avoids calling him Rādhā. Mahāprabhu himself is sometimes Rukmiṇī, sometimes Lakṣmī and sometimes Durgā, but never Rādhā in this play. Gadādhara enters after Nārada's introduction accompanied by Brahmānanda (as his *baṛāi*) and Gaṅgā Dāsa. There is some joking, flirtation and Advaita finally reminds Gaṅgā Dāsa to be careful about his speech, for other men's wives should be treated as one's mother. Then Advaita says; "My lord is very fond of song and dance—if you dance nicely he will surely give you many gifts." At this Gadādhara dances in the mood of Ramā (Lakṣmī) while the other devotees sing appropriate songs. Vṛndāvana Dāsa says;

"Who would not be overwhelmed and start to cry upon seeing the dancing of Gadādhara? A river of love flows from his two eyes. The earth became wet and thought herself blessed by the descent of the holy waters. Gadādhara became the Gaṅgā personified. *Verily, it is the truth that Gadādhara is Kṛṣṇa's prakṛti.* Caitanya himself has announced again and again; 'Gadādhara is a part of my Vaikuṇṭha family.' Those who sang and those who watched all flowed away in a river of *prema.* By the grace of Śrī Caitanya all lost their external consciousness. The devotees also cried the name of Hari, calling out in ecstasy. Hearing the crying on all four sides, Gadādhara danced in the mood of the *gopīs.*[60]

Then Mahāprabhu enters as the *ādya-śakti* or creative energy and adopts the roles of the whole gamut of *śakti* forms, including the bewildering Mohinī who aroused desire even in Śiva.[61]

60. C. bh., Madhya, 18. 113-119.

61. In Vṛndāvana Dāsa's description Caitanya warned before the play began that only those whose senses were fully controlled would be

Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka

The last of the five biographies of the Bengali school is *Caitanya-candrodaya* written more than 30 years after the *Mahākāvya* by a more mature Kavi Karṇapūra. Within a year or two of its composition, he finalized his assessment of the equation of roles in Gaura and Vṛndāvana *līlā* in his *Gauraganoddeśa-dīpikā*. His account of the play at the house of Mahāprabhu's maternal uncle is more formalized according to the rules of Sanskrit drama.[62] Each role has been given a little footnote through comments of the two symbolic observers Maitrī (Friendship) and Premabhakti (Love Devotion).

How seriously Karṇapūra takes the characters is stated by Premabhakti. Maitrī asks how it is that though Śrīvāsa was to have taken Nārada's role, Nārada himself had appeared (so realistic was the guise). Premabhakti's answer is; "He is always absorbed naturally in the mood of Nārada, and by this it is revealed that he is Nārada. The other characters in the play from Advaita on, however, simply assume their different roles. Anyway, you should believe in the play as you see it."

Nevertheless, when Premabhakti herself sees Advaita in the role of Kṛṣṇa she thinks that Kṛṣṇa has appeared before them. After consideration she says; "One who is not Kṛṣṇa, can never become Kṛṣṇa, whereas Kṛṣṇa can take any variety of form just as a person can do the tasks of the limbs of his body, but a limb can never assume the function of the complete person. Therefore, this is not Advaita. Neither is this just the cleverness of the make up artist; Kṛṣṇa himself has incarnated here."[63] Upon seeing Mahāprabhu, Premabhakti says; "The Lord formerly took the form of Mohinī and be-

eligible to see him dance in the mood and dress of a woman. Śrīvāsa and Advaita pleaded that they were therefore ineligible. At this the Lord laughed and assured them that by his grace everyone would remain unperturbed. Thus they were able to see even the form of Mohinī without losing their composure.

62. C. c. n., 3rd Act.

63. *Ibid.*, 3. 37.

wildered the demons. He also created desire in the heart of Śiva, the chief of all gods, who is entirely satisfied in himself. Thus, it is not the least bit amazing that Viśvambhara who is Kṛṣṇa incarnate has taken with his own body the form of Rādhā.[64] Just as a single bean has two halves, so the Lord is complete as the potent and the potency. Because he has both, he can manifest separately either male or female nature according to his desire."[65]

Then, looking again she says; "This one also seems to be Rādhikā's girlfriend Lalitā and not Gadādhara, the best of the *brāhmaṇas.* Either that, or the Lord has divided himself in three ways: once as himself, once as Rādhā, and once again as her girlfriend."[66]

Karṇapūra's example of the two-in-one bean is the first clear attempt to formulate the *milita-tanu* (joined body) theory. Yet he does not want to exclude Gadādhara, who here, as Rādhā's *sakhī*, Lalitā, is non-different from her. Karṇapūra's final conclusion about Gadādhara, though, is given in *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*.

There, Karṇapūra makes decisive statements on the original Vṛndāvana identities of all the different devotees. He is unequivocal about Gadādhara Paṇḍita;[67]

"She who was previously *prema* incarnate, the goddess of Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhā is Gadādhara, the beloved of Gaura, who bears the title 'Paṇḍita.' Svarūpa (Dāmodara) ascertained him to be the goddess of fortune (Lakṣmī) of Vraja. She who was previously the goddess of fortune in Vṛndāvana, the beloved of Śyāmasundara (Kṛṣṇa), is now the goddess of fortune of *prema* for Gaura, Gadādhara Paṇḍita."

He then cites the opinion that Mahāprabhu possessed the mood of Rādhārāṇī and accepts it. Using his own verse cited above he identifies Lalitā as a third entity integral to the

64. *Ibid.*, 3. 42.
65. *Ibid.*, 3. 43.
66. *Ibid.*, 3. 44.
67. G. g. d., 147-149.

duad.[68] Whenever Kṛṣṇa happens to take any particular mood, it is Rādhārāṇī's duty as his *hlādinī-śakti* to see to his pleasure. The problem is that, in Mahāprabhu's *līlā*, he is not in the mood of Kṛṣṇa but that of Rādhā. Nevertheless, can Rādhā desert her Kṛṣṇa even if he is maddened into thinking that he is her? That madness too is her creation; will she not follow her own performance in whatever way she can? Rādhā's *sakhīs* (friends) are non-different from her, therefore when Mahāprabhu is in the mood of Rādhā, Rādhā takes the role of a *sakhī*.

Nimāi Sannyāsa

Dramatically speaking, the five Bengal writers depend primarily on the incident of Nimāi's entering the renounced order of life. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* verses in the Eleventh Canto which the Vaiṣṇavas believe indicate the Lord's *gaura* (golden) incarnation mention renunciation as the first major point of his *līlā*;

> tyaktvā sudustyajasurepsita-rājya-lakṣmīṁ
> dharmiṣṭha ārya-vacasā yad agād araṇyam
> māyā-mṛgaṁ dayitayepsitam anvadhāvad
> vande mahāpuruṣa te caraṇāravindam.[69]

"I worship your lotus feet, O Great One; you gave up a kingdom and the goddess of fortune which were most difficult to renounce for they are desired even by the gods. Being the most dutiful (religious) you went to the forest on the word of *brāhmaṇa* (father or guru) and ran after the illusory deer which was desired by your beloved one."

This verse has a variety of interpretations. The old commentators take the *mahā-puruṣa* here as Rāmacandra. Indeed, at first glance, their reading seems correct. The word *māyā-mṛga*, for instance, clearly recreates the picture of Rāma running after the trickster Marīca's illusory deer after the repeated requests of Sītā. But the verse is truly out of place in the

68. C. c. n., 3. 44.
69. *Bhāg.*, 11. 5. 34.

discussion of the *avatāra* of the age of Kali, its religion and its glories which precedes and follows it. A verse about Rāmacandra appears no where in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in such an uncontextual way. The *Bhāgavata* shows practically no bias towards Rāma whatsoever, duly mentioning him in his place as a matter of course. Another objection is that Rāma did not leave his Lakṣmī for she went with him to the forest.

The *Mahābhārata* says *sannyāsa-kṛt*, the supreme Lord takes the renounced order; who can deny that Nimāi had built himself a little kingdom in Navadvīpa. He led thousands of persons in a demonstration to the house of the magistrate of the district to demand religious freedom. He had converted great sinners and had charmed the entire town with his beauty and intelligence. The leading citizens accepted him as an incarnation and worshiped him. He had received his *abhiṣeka* or coronation bath. Yet he deserted it all.

Mahāprabhu's Lakṣmī was Viṣṇupriyā, his young wife, in the full blossom of adolescence, clinging to him with a love simple, refined and uncompromising. Yet he left her.

Though none of the authors have quoted the *Bhāgavata* verse, they all mention the curse of a *brāhmaṇa* who became angry with Nimāi for reasons which vary in each biography. The result is the same, however, the *brāhmaṇa* tore apart his sacred thread in the ancient process of cursing practiced by the gods of the earth (*brāhmaṇas*) and announced that Mahāprabhu was never to have happiness in family life. Mahāprabhu, in good devotional tradition, accepted the curse.

The word *māyā-mṛga* is given various interpretations culminating in the idea of *prema* which is to be given to the *jīvas* (living beings) out of his mercy. There is another interpretation of the verse as referring to Kṛṣṇa giving up Goloka to taste the love which is so desirable to Rādhā. The central theme of Mahāpraphu's *līlā* is his *sannyāsa*.

Take, for instance, Narahari's beautiful verse;

gopīnāṁ kuca-kuṅkumeṇa nicitaṁ vāsaḥ kim asyāruṇaḥ
tapta-kāñcana-kānti-gopa-vanitāśleṣeṇa gauraṁ vapuḥ,

tāsāṁ gāḍha-karābhibandhana-lasad-romodgamo dṛśyate
āścaryaṁ sakhi paśya lampaṭa-guroḥ sannyāsi-
vesaṁ kṣitau.[70]

"Has the saffron fallen from the breasts of the *gopīs* made his cloth yellow like the morning sun? Has the embrace of the wives of the cowherds, whose lustre is like molten gold, turned his body light? It can be seen that the tight grip of their hands has made his bodily hair stand erect in joy. How strange, my friend! Look! the *guru* of the licentious is on the earth in the dress of a *sannyāsī*."

Tragedy is the basis of both Rāma's and Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*, and that tragedy, in both cases, is in the Lord's leaving the place of his childhood, the place where he was already established as the object of everyone's love and adoration. The similarity between those *līlās* and Gaurāṅga *līlā* is obvious, and the dramatic effect caught the minds of Bengal. Even today, a play about the life of Gaurāṅga usually ends with him going into the distance singing "Haribol," while Viṣṇupriyā and Mother Śacī lead the Navadvīpa devotees in crying for their devotion-maddened hero.

These *līlās* are said to have two aspects, external and internal.[71] The external aspect refers to the world-saving activity and the internal to the tasting of *rasa*. Just as Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana and went to Mathurā to execute his duties as an *avatāra*, and that duty kept him from ever returning to his beloved devotees, even his dearest Rādhā, so too Mahāprabhu left Navadvīpa for a similar purpose. For dramatic reasons, even though Locana Dāsa carefully compares Gadādhara with Rādhā in *Caitanya-maṅgala*, he cannot use him for the dramatic addition of *madhura-rasa* (the devotional erotic sentiment). The heroine instead is the young wife Viṣṇupriyā. For this reason, Locana gives a lengthy description of the last night Mahāprabhu spent with her in which he (for perhaps the

70. *Śacī-nandanāṣṭakam*, 1.

71. C. c., Ādi, 10. 97.

first time in their short married life) really plays the role of a husband.

Murāri and Kavi Karṇapūra focus neither on Gadādhara or Viṣṇupriyā, concentrating on Śacīmātā as the figure evoking *karuṇa* (compassion). In his play Karṇapūra shows Gadādhara lamenting in shock for a departed Nimāi whereas Vṛndāvana Dāsa shows him spending the last night with the Mahāprabhu and leaving with him for Katwa to witness the shaving of his head and his formal initiation into the renounced order.

In Vṛndāvana Dāsa's *Caitanya-bhāgavata* the external cause of the renunciation was an incident involving some of the students of Navadvīpa.

"One day the Lord of the universe sat in a mood of jealous anger toward Kṛṣṇa. Rather than chant Kṛṣṇa's name, as was his wont, he was muttering; 'Gopī, Gopī, Gopī.' Some students came nearby and, puzzled by this contradictory behaviour, challenged the Lord. They said; 'Nimāi Paṇḍita, why have you given up chanting of the names of Kṛṣṇa which are all auspicious and begun to chant the word "*gopī*." The scriptures have instructed all to chant his names.'

'Nimāi answered; "Why should I chant Kṛṣṇa's name? He is not worthy of glorification. What gain can be had from it? He shot Bāli from behind like a crow; being dominated by one woman he cut off another's nose. He tied up Bali and despatched him to the lower planets after taking everything he had. What's the use of remembering such a person!"[72]

When the scholars insisted on berating him for his breach of scriptural norms, he turned upon them in anger. Threatening them with physical punishment he drove them away. The foolish students had no comprehension of the elevated state of the Lord's devotional mood. They grumbled amongst themselves that he should be taken care of. Nimāi had become too arrogant; he needed to be deflated.

When Mahāprabhu became conscious of what had taken

72. C. bh., Kābāsī edition, pp. 447-8. (Madhya, 25. 89-92).

place he said; "I took rock candy to reduce the phlegm, but it has had the opposite effect."[73] People would not respect him if they knew him as a mere householder. Were he a *sannyāsī*, everyone would give him respect and thus his preaching work could go on unhindered. Murāri has him say to Śrīvāsa; "Just as merchants travel abroad to bring back wealth, so I am leaving home to bring back a wealth of *prema*."[74] At any rate, the Caitanya mystique took a new form with his entering *sannyāsa*.

Gadādhara Paṇḍita in Purī

There are numerous differences in the lists of those devotees who accompanied Mahāprabhu from Katwa after his *sannyāsa* and travelled with him for three days in Rāḍha before he arrived in Śāntipura, and again of those who accompanied him from Śāntipura to Purī.

Murāri Gupta mentions only Nityānanda's presence in Rāḍha; Kavi Karṇapūra adds Gadādhara and Mukunda; Vṛndāvana Dāsa includes Candraśekhara and Brahmānanda. In the *Nāṭaka*, however, Karṇapūra changes his opinion and excludes Gadādhara, retaining only Nitāi and Candraśekhara. Kavirāja Gosvāmin adds Mukunda.

Similar confusion surrounds the trip to Purī, only Murāri mentions Gadādhara. Vṛndāvana Dāsa has Jagadānanda and Nityānanda accompany Mahāprabhu. Karṇapūra states clearly that Advaita provided four men: Nityānanda, Jagadānanda, Mukunda and Dāmodara Paṇḍita. Kavirāja Gosvāmin accepts this version.

We can only be sure that Nityānanda was a travelling companion on those first days of Nimāi's *sannyāsa*. Whether or not Gadādhara went on that first trip, he definitely arrived in Purī within a short time. He also took *sannyāsa* and is the only member of the Pañca Tattva who remained an associate of the Lord in the later portion of his *līlā*.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 449.
74. K. c. c., 2. 18. 19-20,

Vṛndāvana Dāsa like all the other Bengal-based biographers, is all-too-brief on the events of the Lord's life after his going to Purī. All the authors stress his journeys to the south and to Vṛndāvana; only Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja gives a vivid picture of his ecstasies in Rādhā's mood. No other author has mentioned Gadādhara in the later *līlā*, except in one incident briefly described by Murāri and elaborated by Vṛndāvana Dāsa.

Murāri says that after returning from his trip to Gauḍa in 1513 A. D., Mahāprabhu first went to visit the temple of Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha where Gadādhara was staying.[75]

Followed by Gadādhara and Nityānanda, Kṛṣṇa (Śrī Caitanya) came to see Gopīnātha whom he saw as the son of the King Nanda playing his flute. Hari, amusing himself by experiencing the same desires as the *gopīs*, embraced Gopīnātha suddenly and remained motionless. Seeing the golden Lord and knowing him to be Kṛṣṇa, Gadādhara became happy. Being directly Rādhā himself Gadādhara took him to his own chest and, helping him down, pacified him. Then Gadādhara cooked and offered food to Gopīnātha after which he fed Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda. After the meal Gaurāṅga sat comfortably along with Gadādhara. Being the knower of *rasa*, he became eager for the *rāsa līlā*. Fully absorbed in that he stayed in the garden with the other enjoyer of *rasa*, Balarāma.[76]

Without referring to Gadādhara as Rādhā, Vṛndāvana Dāsa tells the same story a little more elaborately, giving Nityānanda a more important role.[77] Nityānanda brings rice from Bengal to the Gopīnātha temple where Gadādhara stayed alone with his deity. Gadādhara cooks the rice along with a vegetable of tamarind leaves, and offers everything to Gopīnātha. Without any notice Mahāprabhu himself arrives and wonders why he was not invited. "Nityānanda has brought the food, Gadādhara has cooked it. Everything has been

75. *Ibid.*, 3. 18. 22-29.
76. *rasa-rāma-rāme.*
77. C. bh., Kābāsī edition, pp. 599-601, (Antya, Chapter Seven).

offered to Gopīnātha. Certainly I also have a share."[78] The three Prabhus (lords) then sit down together and eat.

Vṛndāvana Dāsa's conclusion is that one can know Nityānanda only if one has Gadādhara's mercy and that Gadādhara will never be merciful to the one who has even the slightest bit of enmity towards Nitāi. Such defenses of Nityānanda are common in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata*. It is an indication that at the time of its writing, some persons felt that Nityānanda was a less significant associate of Mahāprabhu than Gadādhara.

Nityānanda Tattva

In this article it is not possible to give a thorough discussion of Nityānanda's personality for he is a character of the greatest significance in Mahāprabhu's *līlā*. He was the chief of the preachers of the Lord's message in Bengal and was responsible for the conversion of many business men and other lower class people to Vaiṣṇavism.

Without exception he is identified as Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa's older brother, the ancient deity known as his first expansion (*ādivyūha*), Saṅkarṣaṇa.

Kavi Karṇapūra states that Nitāi and his followers were *gopālā gopa-veśinaḥ*, cowherd boys who dressed that way also.[79]

In numerous songs Vāsudeva Ghoṣa and others describe Nityānanda in this dress with the other '*gopālas*.' There they imitate the *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa's *sakhas* (friends) such as cowherding and all the other games they used to play with him. They carried flutes and sticks and wore peacock feathers, etc.[80]

Whenever Mahāprabhu displayed his opulences Nityānanda was there to take the role of Ananta and hold an umbrella over his head. Being identified with Ananta, he was the one who glorified Caitanya with a thousand mouths. When Mahāprabhu showed the form of Rāma to Murāri, Nityānanda took the form of Lakṣmaṇa.

78. C. bh., 3. 7. 146.
79. G. g. d., 14.
80. C. bh., 3. 5. 353.

Vṛndāvana Dāsa, the chief expounder of Nitāi's glories, begins the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* by identifying Nityānanda with Balarāma. He supports his authority to enjoy the *rāsa līlā* by citing the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Nityānanda is *īśvara,* the supreme controller. He is the supersoul, the source of the oversouls of the entire cosmic manifestation, the individual universals as well as the individual souls; he is the supreme enjoyer. He is the kind distributor of love for Gaurāṅga and is therefore beyond criticism. Mahāprabhu is quoted as saying that even if Nityānanda should enter a wine shop or take a low-class woman on his lap, he is still always worshipable.

The reference here, of course, is to Nityānanda's marriage, which none of the authors have explicitly mentioned. He had been a *sannyāsin* (renunciate) when he suddenly married the two daughters of Sūrya Dāsa. There no doubt was an uproar, just as there was when he changed his mode of dress and began wearing various jewelled ornaments of silver and gold and other finery. In one place Gaurāṅga even says that these decorations represent the different aspects of devotion.

Only Jayānanda briefly mentions Nityānanda's marriage. Vṛndāvana does mention that after the intimate meal at the temple of Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha, Mahāprabhu gave some confidential instructions to Nityānanda which no one else heard. Those instructions, according to the *Nityānanda-vaṁśa-vistāra* had to do with his getting married.

Only in one place, in Murāri Gupta's *Kaḍacā*, do we find an exception to Nityānanda's unwavering masculine identity. In the play at Candraśekhara's house, Baladeva (Nityānanda) came on stage in the dress of a *gopī* in order to taste a special *rasa*. When he took the sapling-like hand of the lord of his life, his body became drenched with the tears flowing from his eyes.[81]

81. K. c. c., 2. 16. 6; gopī-veśa-dharako baladevaḥ
prāviśad rasa-viśeṣa-vinodī
prāṇanātha-kara-pallava-pradhṛto
nayana-vāri-paripūrṇa-sudehaḥ.

It should be noted that not one of the other authors has accepted Murāri's version. Everyone else has cast Nityānanda as Jaratī, the *baṛāi buṛī* or Yogamāyā. *Baṛāi* means old woman. In the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa songs of Caṇḍī Dāsa, the *baṛāi* is the old woman of the house who surreptitiously supports the amours of her dependent heroine.

Later on this old woman's role is divided between Mukharā Rādhā's affectionate, intentionally bumbling grandmother and Paurṇamāsī, the much more serious figure also known as Yogamāyā who mystically maneuvers all the events of Vṛndāvana.

Kavi Karṇapūra says; "Nityānanda's acceptance of the role of Yogamāyā is not amazing because 'the god known as Śeṣa becomes the abode, bed, seat, shoes, cloth, pillow, umbrella, etc. of the Lord. In order to serve the Lord, he accepts all other forms and is therefore called Śeṣa, the remainder."[82]

Nityānanda is thus the form of service (*sevā-vigraha*). Although God in every respect, he is God as servant to himself.

Vṛndāvana Dāsa shows a penchant for describing Nityānanda's mood of a cowherd boy and other wild and erratic manifestations of his devotional ecstasy. After Mahāprabhu tells Nityānanda to give up the *muni-dharma* of reclusive meditation, Nitāi returns dancing to Gauḍa with his party of *gopālas*, turning every place they go upside down. There was among them, however, another Gadādhara, Gadādhara Dāsa who was not a *gopāla*. There (in perhaps the only place Rādhā's name is mentioned in the entire *Caitanya-bhāgavata*), Gadādhara Dāsa is said to be constantly absorbed in Rādhā's mood, calling out; "Who will buy my cow's milk?"[83] At Gadādhara's house in Eṛiyādaha, there was a performance of *Dāna-līlā* (where presumably Nityānanda took Kṛṣṇa's role and Gadhādhara Rādhā's).[84] Vṛndāvana Dāsa's conclusion is that;

82. C. c. n., 3. 45.
83. C. bh., Antya, 5. 238.
84. Whatever Gadādhara Dāsa's internal moods were, externally he showed spirit. He apparently went and told the magistrate (Muslim) of his village to say Kṛṣṇa's name otherwise he would "tear off his head." C. bh., Antya, 5. 400.

ye bhakti gopikā-gaṇer kahe bhāgavate
nityānanda haite tāhā pāila jagate.

"The love for Kṛṣṇa in the mood of the *gopīs* which is described in the *Bhāgavata* was attained in the world through Nityānanda."[85]

There are may occasions when Vṛndāvana describes Nityānanda's glories through the mouth of Śrī Caitanya. Mahāprabhu tells Rāghava Paṇḍita; "I tell you confidentially that Nityānanda is completely non-different from me."[86]

When Mahāprabhu tells the devotees to take pieces of Nityānanda's *kaupin,* he says; "By Nityānanda's grace one can attain *viṣṇu-bhakti.* You should know that he is Kṛṣṇa's complete *śakti.*"[87]

This does not form very strong evidence of Nityānanda's being Rādhā, and nowhere does Vṛndāvana make such a statement. Generally, though, Nityānanda's strong absorption in a masculine role makes the proposition seem unnatural.

Murāri, therefore, notes that Balarāma was not present at the *vasta-haraṇa* incident. "At that time the *avadhūta,* Nityānanda, appeared on the scene again. In great happiness he also joined the dancing and chanting of the Lord's names. The lotus-eyed Nitāi played with Gaurāṅga just as the bearer of the plow had previously played with the cowherd boys in Vṛndāvana. When this dancing came to an end, the Lord said to the best of the *brāhmaṇas;* 'Wash the feet of the *avadhūta.* Drink the water and take it on your heads.' "[88]

Even so, "Whenever Mahāprabhu wants to enjoy in a particular way, Nityānanda takes a suitable form. The Lord becomes a *gopī,* Nitāi the *baṛāi.* Who will understand if he has no sensibility?"[89]

There is a group of devotees who say that Nityānanda is

85. C. bh., Antya, 5. 303.
86. *Ibid.*, 5. 100-104.
87. C. bh., Madhya, 12. 26.
88. K. c. c., 2. 10. 19-20.
89. C. bh., Madhya, 18. 218-19.

Rādhā, using the above argument to equate Nityānanda with Kṛṣṇa's *śaktis.* They point to songs by a Vṛndāvana Dāsa who is supposed to be the writer of the *Caitanya-bhāgavata.* This identification is doubtful, however. There are other texts also ascribed to Vṛndāvana Dāsa, particularly the *Nityānanda-vaṁśa-vistāra* in which Nityānanda is established rather prosaically as the guru of all the *rasas*, including *madhura.*

One of this Vṛndāvana Dāsa's songs goes like this;

Nitāi is the lover, the ocean of *rasa,*
 the guru of all the types of love.
Whatever one may want, that is what he gives,
 for he is the tree which fulfils all desires.
Just like Rādhā, he has jealous fits of anger
 and stays always by his side,
Not caring for day or night, he wanders always
 in the pleasure of talks of Kṛṣṇa.
Sitting on his left side, he smiles sweetly,
 calling him the lord of his life.
As Rādhā desires in her mind,
 so too does he.
Like the golden *ketaki* flower, he is the form of *rasa,*
 coming to fulfil his own desire.
Vṛndāvana Dāsa makes his appeal
 to see Nitāi as Rādhā.[90]

Where did this idea came from? Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmin does not permit Nityānanda to participate in any of Mahāprabhu's exclusively *madhura-rasa līlās.* Even when he dances in *gopī-bhāva* before Jagannātha, Nitāi remains somewhat distant;[91]

"Due to being overwhelmed by Rādhā's love, it was as if the Lord took that very form. Nityānanda watched from a distance and offered prayer. Seeing the deep emotion of the Lord, he remained somewhat distant. Other than Nityānanda,

90. H. K. Mukhopādhyāya, *Vaiṣṇava-padāvali*, p. 496 (?). (This song has not been found in the V. p. Ed.)

91. C. c., Madhya, 14. 235-38.

who can stop the Lord. The Lord's mood did not cease and the *kīrtana* did not continue." Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in his *Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya* on this section comments that the reason he stayed distant was because his own jurisdiction in *rasa* was contradictory.

How Did Nitāi Become Rādhā?

Nityānanda's increasing popularity and the belief of his disciples in his divine intimacy and identity with Gaurāṅga who was supposed to have given the highest love of the *gopīs* to everyone played an important part in his identification with Rādhā. Kavirāja says; "Mahāprabhu cared not whether someone asked for *prema*; he judged not their qualifications. His only consideration was; 'I must give.'" If Kṛṣṇa took the mood of Rādhā to experience the glory of her love and to pay back his debt to her by suffering its sweet pains and by giving it to the other souls of this world, then how could he avoid giving it to Nityānanda who was so close to him. Murāri has said that Nityānanda is also *rasa-viśeṣa-vinodī*. He wanted to experience *madhura-rasa* by the power of Mahāprabhu's mystique.

Nityānanda took the householder *āśrama* at the request of Śrī Caitanya in order to temper the movement's revolutionary spirit and make the necessary compromises with society that would insure its long survival. The rebellion against society on the caste question could not go on forever. Marriage was the "taming of Nitāi." He was the *avadhūta*; he could go into some frenzied dance with the cloth meant to cover his loins bound instead around his head; or he could sit in Mālinī's lap and suck her breast like a baby, though she was well past her child bearing age and he a mature thirty-two years of age, and, what is more, make her bring forth milk. Such a person could not forever maintain the respect and awe of the serious community. Mahāprabhu, though respecting Nitāi's spiritual temperament, was the one who tamed him, who made him self-conscious enough to keep his clothes on and eventually told him to get married. When he got married he accepted all the

trappings of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. He had to take his *upanayana* (sacred thread initiation) again, dutifully following all the rules rigidly. Even so, there was much opposition before and criticism after the marriage.

No one can doubt that Nityānanda responded to the challenge of being a householder preacher in the true style. His wives were jewels; in one he bore his children and in the other he invested his spiritual energy. Through Vasudhā his lone, powerful son, Vīrabhadra, was born and Jāhnavā raised him. It was Jāhnavā who went to Vṛndāvana more than once, met Śrī Jīva and Kavirāja Gosvāmin and whom all accepted as Anaṅga Mañjarī, the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī and the *śakti* of Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa's brother.

Jāhnavā became the symbol of Vṛndāvana's *mañjarī-bhajana* in Gauḍa Deśa. She promoted the Gosvāmin books through Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Narottama. Jāhnavā's adopted son Rāmacandra of Bāghnāpāḍā wrote the *Anaṅga-mañjarī-sampuṭikā* in which he quotes from a passage attributed to the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* called the *Dharaṇi-śeṣa-saṁvāda.*

One doctrine which arises out of this dialogue between the Earth and the snake Ananta is that Rādhā is the *hlādinī* energy, Kṛṣṇa the *saṁvit* potency and Baladeva the *sandhinī*. Baladeva is the substance of which God's playthings are made. He cannot be excluded from the *madhura līlā* because he is automatically present everywhere. Then the text equates Anaṅga Mañjarī with him;

> Rāma in a secret form, fulfils his own desires
> by becoming Anaṅga Mañjarī.
> In the affairs of *rasa līlā*, he remains in Vṛndāvana
> enjoying with Govinda.
> Hari, Hari! Who can understand
> Rāma's way of doing things?
> The *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, in unlimited forms
> taking which the Lord enjoys.
> Rādhā's sister, her own younger sister,
> who wears a blue dress,

Defeating spring *ketaki* flowers,
and the white *jāti* and jasmine,
speaking so sweetly and softly.
In his friend-body he is a friend;
in his serving mood a servant;
in parental affection, a young boy.
Vṛndāvana Dāsa therefore has surrendered to him
knowing him to be the jewel of his desire.[92]

Another song by the same author exults in Nitāi's pervading all the features of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's most intimate *līlās.*

In the *Anaṅga-mañjarī-sampuṭikā*, Rādhā's younger sister has a direct, amorous relationship with Kṛṣṇa, arranged out of Rādhā's desire to see the happiness of both. At the time of her departure from the mortal world, Mā Jāhnavā is said to have transformed into a beautiful image of Anaṅga Mañjarī standing in a dancing pose on Kṛṣṇa's right side.

This Anaṅga-Kānāi-Rāi is the worshipable triad of the devotees of Nityānanda. A yearly festival is held at the Ṭotā Gopīnātha Temple in Purī commemorating the previously described meeting of Nityānanda with Gadādhara and Śrī Caitanya. A *kīrtana* sung then contains the words; "Nitāi Gaura Gadāi, Anaṅga Kānāi Rāi," words not found in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* version of the incident.

At any rate, all these ideas represent thoughts developed among Nityānanda's family descendents and their followers. The curious thing is that although Vṛndāvana Dāsa criticized the Gaurāṅga Nāgaras in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Nityānanda and his followers were probably more partial to Gaura *kīrtana* than to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *kīrtana.* Vīrabhadra preached the names of Nitāi and Gaura. Singing of the beautiful Lord Gaurāṅga naturally involved descriptions of his physical attractiveness. This led the followers of Nityānanda to a greater appreciation of the Śrīkhaṇḍa devotees. The songs of Locana Dāsa and Narahari are song with great gusto by the followers of Nityā-

92. V. p., p. 482.

nanda even today, their love for Mahāprabhu exceeding that for Kṛṣṇa, for Mahāprabhu is the new, 'improved' Kṛṣṇa.

Gadādhara in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, by the desire of the fates, was given the final say about Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. He had the opportunity of hearing and reading all of the available materials given by Murāri, Kavi Karṇapūra and Vṛndāvana Dāsa, whom he sometimes follows and sometimes contradicts. Often he acted as a judge when there were differences of opinion, accepting one author's version over that of the others. The most valuable source of information for Kṛṣṇadāsa was Raghunātha Dāsa who lived with Svarūpa Dāmodara in Mahāprabhu's Purī residence, Gambhirā, for the last eighteen years of Mahāprabhu's life.

Kavirāja has followed the first devotees of Navadvīpa in accepting the Pañca Tattva previously set down in verse by Svarūpa Dāmodara, but he is loathe to call Gadādhara Rādhārāṇī. Kavirāja Gosvāmin may have thought that after accepting Śrī Caitanya as the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa it is impossible for Rādhā to have another separate existence. Therefore, he called Gadādhara: *prabhur nija-śakti,*[93] *śakti-avatāra,*[94] *antaraṅga-bhakta*[95] and *teṅho lakṣmī-rūpā tār same keho nāñi.*[96] "The followers of Gadādhara Paṇḍita are glorious, for they all have Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya as the lover of their lives."[97]

In the *Madhya-līlā* Kavirāja Gosvāmin says that amongst the Purī associates of the Lord, Rāmānanda worshiped him in friendship (*sakhya*), Paramānanda Purī in guardianship (*vātsalya*) and Govinda Dāsa in servitude. Gadādhara, Jagadānanda and Svarūpa Dāmodara were absorbed in the ecstasy of the

93. C. c., Ādi, 1. 41.
94. *Ibid.*, 7. 17.
95. *Ibid.*, 7. 17.
96. *Ibid.*, 10. 15.
97. *Ibid.*, 12. 89.

chief of the *rasas* (*madhura*). By these four relationships the Lord was controlled.[98]

Nevertheless, even though Gadādhara's name comes first in the list, it was Svarūpa Dāmodara who took the frontline position as the most intimate associate of the Lord. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Svarūpa Dāmodara is said to be the chief of all the *sannyāsī* disciples of the Lord.[99] Svarūpa Dāmodara's specialty was *kīrtana* and Gadādhara's was reading the *Bhāgavata*. Hearing the *līlā* of Dhruva and Prahlāda from Gadādhara the Lord would display all the different ecstatic symptoms.

Svarūpa Dāmodara's age is unclear. Vṛndāvana Dāsa describes him as a friend of Puṇḍarīkṣa Vidyānidhi, Gadādhara's guru, and his father's friend.[100] They call each other brother.[101] If this is true then Svarūpa Damodara must necessarily have been much older than Gadādhara. Yadunandana indicates in the *Gadādhara-śākhā-nirṇaya* that Dāmodara was a disciple of Gadādhara himself, but there is no proof other than that. Jagadānanda and Gadādhara were both slightly younger than Mahāprabhu. It seems more reasonable to think of Svarūpa Dāmodara as of a similar age, but there is nothing to contradict Vṛndāvana Dāsa's statement. At any rate, if all Gadāhara delivered were readings of the stories of Dhruva and

98. C. c., Madhya, 2. 78.

99. C. bh., Antya, 10. 41. *Sannyāsa* carries with it the significance of taking a female identity in relation to God. In the *Sādhana-dīpikā*, renunciation from household responsibility is said to be the prerequisite for entering into the mysteries of *mañjarī-bhajana*. Locana Dāsa stresses the significance of Gadādhara's *sannyāsa* as proof of his identity with Rādhā. Nityānanda and Advaita had wives, *śaktis*. Thus they were automatically cast as *śaktimān* (possessors of power). Mahāprabhu eluded the trap of becoming a *puruṣa* (male) again and adopted the *sannyāsa* order. Another uncertain book, the *Saṁskāra-dīpikā* gives *gopī-bhāvāśrayāya svāhā* as the incantation used when donning the *kaupin*. Although there are exceptions, most orthodox branches of the school still follow the rule that one's *mañjarī* identity is given only to renunciates.

100. C. bh., Antya, 10. 86-7.

101. *Ibid.*, 10. 114, 116.

Prahlāda, then it's not too surprising that Mahāprabhu was more entranced when Svarūpa and Rāmānanda sang or recited the *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta, Gīta-govinda,* Caṇḍīdāsa and the Tenth Canto of the *Bhāgavata.*

Gadādhara moved to the lonely sands of the Cāṭaka Parvata where he stayed alone with Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha, the black Kṛṣṇa; the golden Kṛṣṇa was lost in *rādhā-bhāva* in Gambhirā. What would Rādhā do there? Like Rūpa Gosvāmin's Rādhā in the New Vṛndāvana of Dvārakā, he (she) worshiped his lonely deity even though he was living with a Kṛṣṇa he no longer recognized.

Gadādhara's Failure to Hold the Lord

When Mahāprabhu desired to go to Vṛndāvana he was held back by the sorrowful pleas and the various tricks of the devotees in Purī. When Gadādhara also expressed a desire to go, the Lord objected that his commitment was to a life in Purī.[102] Gadādhara replied; "Wherever you go, that is Nīlācala. My commitment to a permanent life of renunciation in Purī can go to hell."

Mahāprabhu said; "You have your service to Gopīnātha which has to be taken care of."

"Seeing your feet is worth a million such services."

"You will give up your service to Gopīnātha and I will have to suffer the sin. If you want to please me, then stay here and don't abandon Gopīnātha."

"Don't worry about the sins. I will take the responsibility for that. If you do not want me to go with you, I will just go alone."

Saying this, Gadādhara followed some distance behind Mahāprabhu's party. When they got as far as Cuttack, the Lord made him join the group. Who can describe the glories of Paṇḍita Gosvāmin's love for Caitanya, for whom he gave up his vows to Gopīnātha as if they were straw. Although

102. *kṣetra-sannyāsa.*

externally the Lord expressed displeasure, internally he was pleased.

He said; "If your intention was to give up your vows then you've been successful. You have left Purī and come to a distant land. You want to stay with me for your own happiness. Seeing you break your religious principles like this, I am very unhappy. If you want to see me happy then return to Nīlācala. I swear that I will not hear any more about this."

Having made his unswerving decision, the Lord got on the boat to cross the Mahānadī leaving Gadādhara on the bank. The boat set off and Gadādhara fell to the ground in a swoon. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya had him lifted up. He said; "Get up, Paṇḍita. The Lord's *līlās* are like this. He suffers, even breaks his own word to fulfil his devotee's promise, just as in the case of Bhīṣma. So now he is suffering separation from you so that your promise will not be broken."[103]

Mahāprabhu criticized Gadādhara's selfishness in wanting to remain with him as though this was his vow in this life. Ultimately, for this or whatever reason, the Lord left him. Could Kṛṣṇa leave Rādhā? In *prakaṭa-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa sometimes does leave. That is only a show.

When the Lord returned after failing to reach Vṛndāvana his conclusion was; "I left behind Gadādhara giving him a great deal of pain. As a result I was unable to reach Vraja. Now you all please be kind to me and think of a way in which I can freely go there."

Hearing this Gadādhara became overwhelmed with love for the Lord and falling at his feet humbly said; "Wherever you are, that is Vṛndāvana. The Yamunā, the Gaṅgā, all the places of pilgrimage are there. Still, if you want to go to Vṛndāvana just to teach the world, then go. You are free to do as you please."[104]

103. C. c., Madhya, 16. 130-146.
104. *Ibid.*, 16. 278-81.

Vallabha Bhaṭṭa and Gadādhara

The last incident involving Gadādhara Paṇḍita in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is the one in which he became the spiritual master of Vallabha Bhaṭṭa.[105]

The whole of Purī was well aware that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya was giving the scholar Vallabha Bhaṭṭa the cold shoulder and not listening to any of his explanations of the *Bhāgavata*. Feeling slighted. Vallabha went to Gadādhara and finding him less tough-skinned, he tried to persuade him to listen to his writings. Gadādhara became confused by Vallabha's request, but being weak, he was ultimately forced to hear the brash scholar's explanations. Because of his own nobility he was too polite to deny him; internally he took shelter of Kṛṣṇa knowing that Mahāprabhu would be displeased. He knew, though, that the Lord within his heart would know of the purity of his intention. Thus, even though Gadādhara was not at fault, Mahāprabhu's associates were unhappy with him. Strengthened by the co-operation of Gadādhara, Vallabha once again tried to establish a position amongst the Gauḍīyas led by Śrī Caitanya and Advaita. His efforts were to no avail. Finally Caitanya brought about the surrender of Vallabha's ego through various measures of neglect and chastisement.

Although Vallabha was originally a worshiper of the Baby Kṛṣṇa, in Gadādhara's association his mind was turned to the worship of the youthful and romantic Kṛṣṇa. He even asked Gadādhara for initiation. The effete Gadādhara was once again reluctant to act without Mahāprabhu's approval.

Here Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja compares the character of Gadādhara to that of Rukmiṇī, reminding us that the more brash of Kṛṣṇa's queens, Satyabhāmā, was present in Mahāprabhu's *līlā* as Jagadānanda Paṇḍita. Satyabhāmā made Kṛṣṇa fight with Indra and the demigods to bring back the heavenly Pārijāta tree. Rukmiṇī, however, was mild and dedicated, unable to tolerate any hard words. Unkind words spoken even in jest

105. C. c., Antya, 7. 86-162.

caused her to faint and fall like a banana tree in a windstorm. Similarly, Jagadānanda was forward and argumentative in his relationship with Mahāprabhu while Gadādhara was mild. Even if the Lord was desirous of seeing him lovingly angry he was unable to muster up any such audaciousness before his Lord because he was too conscious of the divinity of the Lord.

Gadādhara answered Vallabha's request for initiation by saying; "I am not independent. Gaurāṅga is my master. Without his order I can do nothing. You came to see me and for that the Lord has been critical of me."

Finally, Mahāprabhu began to look favourably on Vallabha and accepted his invitation for *prasāda*. Gadādhara was also invited. As he walked to Vallabha's residence with Svarūpa Dāmodara, Jagadānanda and Govinda, Svarūpa asked him why he did not go and reprove the Lord for his neglect of him in a matter in which he had been faultless. Gadādhara's answer was; "The Lord is all-knowing and completely independent. I don't think it is good to try to force him to act against his will. Whatever he says I must accept and tolerate. He will act mercifully after he has judged my faults."

They arrived at the Lord's room. Crying, Gadādhara fell down at the Lord's feet; the Lord smiled and embraced him. Speaking sweetly, he said so that all could hear; "I tried to provoke you but you remained unmoved. You tolerate everything without becoming angry. You have purchased me with your unswerving and yet unaffected behaviour."

Who can understand the emotional character of Gadādhara Paṇḍita? The Lord has been called Gadādhara's life (*prāṇa*). Who can estimate how much mercy the Lord had upon him, for the world sings of the Lord as 'Gadāi's Gaurāṅga.' Who can understand the unfathomable activities of the Lord? He showed everyone Gadādhara's brahminical qualities, his mercy and his deep love for the Lord.

Kavirāja Gosvāmin never, like the earlier writers, called Gadādhara Rādhā. He felt more comfortable comparing him to Rukmiṇī because his nature seemed more close to hers.

Rādhārāṇī had full power over Kṛṣṇa. How could Gaurāṅga so easily turn his back on Gadādhara and send him back to Purī from Cuttack. Rādhā is famous for rebuking her omnipotent lover in complete disdain for his opulence. Such possessive love was more visible in Jagadānanda than in Gadādhara. Thus a full acceptance of Gadādhara's Rādhā-hood met with some objection from the Vṛndāvana school. They were willing to call him Mahāprabhu's *śakti*, *antaraṅga-bhakta*, etc. Following this path, some call him Rādhā's *śakti*, or her effulgence and a variety of other things.[106]

Sādhana-dīpikā

It appears that Kavirāja Gosvāmin's analysis of Gadādhara did not satisfy all the Vṛndāvana devotees. Rūpa and Sanātana empasized Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlā* almost exclusively. Rūpa Gosvāmin's three *aṣṭakas* about Mahāprabhu do not mention Gadāhara anywhere. Neither did Raghunātha Dāsa in his verses about Śrī Caitanya. To show that the Vṛndāvana section of devotees did accept Gadādhara as Rādhā was the work of Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvāmin.

Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvamin appears to have taken up the mantle as the leader of the society of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in Vṛndāvana after Jīva Gosvāmin and before Viśvanātha Cakravartin. He was the disciple of Haridāsa Ācārya who is mentioned in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* as the priest of the Govinda Temple who requested Kavirāja to write the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvāmin became the chief sevitor of Rūpa Gosvāmin's deity, Govindajī, after Haridāsa. Two works of his have survived. The first is the *Daśa-śloki-bhāṣya*, in which he establishes *parakīya-rasa* as eternally present in the *aprakaṭa-līlā* on the basis of the ten verses which form the nucleus of the *Govinda-līlāmṛta*. His second book is the *Sādhana-dīpikā* which discusses various subjects, such as Rādhā-Govinda's service, the truths about Gadādhara, Rūpa Gosvāmin's glories

106. C. bh., Madhya, 18. 115.

and *rāgānuga-bhakti.* To show unequivocal support for the idea that Gadādhara is Rādhā, he quotes verses, which he attributes to Rūpa Gosvāmin, stating that Gadādhara is Rādhā and that all the Gosvāmins of Vṛndāvana are his followers. Svarūpa Dāmodara and all the other worshipers of Mahāprabhu in *madhura-rasa* were conisdered followers of Gadādhara.[107]

Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvāmin argues that one has to enter the *līlā* of the Lord through subservience to the Lord's associates. One must follow Rādhā to attain Kṛṣṇa in his fullest aspect. Similarly, whatever Kṛṣṇa's altered mood in his golden form may be, Rādhā remains with him, though as a male and a renunciate, and one must follow that renunciate in order to attain the sweeter aspects of Gaura-Kṛṣṇa worship.[108]

Rādhākṛṣṇa Gosvāmin adds that Rūpa and Sanātana gave the service of their deities, Govindajī and Madanamohana, to disciples of Gadādhara. Paramānanda, the servant of Gopīnātha, was also Gadādhara's disciple. Their reason: they knew Gadādhara's glories.[109] The verse attributed to Rūpa Gosvāmin is;

avani-sura-varaḥ śrī-paṇḍitākhyo yatīndraḥ
sa khalu bhavati rādhā śrīla-gaurāvatāre
nara-hari-sarakārasyāpi dāmodarasya
prabhu-nija-dayitānāṁ tac ca sāraṁ mataṁ me.

"The best of the earthly gods (*brāhmaṇas*), who, in this

107. Locana Dāsa, *Caitanya-maṅgala;* ataeva tār gaṇa yata vrajer gosāi.

108. *Sādhana-dīpikā,* 7th Kakṣā, p. 166; iti hetor gaura-līlāyām api tathāiva śrī-rādhā-gadādharasyaivānugatye śrī-gaura-govindasya bhajanaṁ sarvotkṛṣṭam.

109. *Ibid.*, 1st Kakṣā, p. 4; tataḥ sarva-svarūpaṁ jānatā śrīla-rūpena śrī-sanātanena ca mūla-svarūpa-śakti-śrī-rādhā-gadādhara-parivāre śrīman-mahāprabhor ājñānusārena sva-sva-sthāne sva-sva-sevā samarpitā. tatrāpi śrī-paṇḍita-gosvāmi-śiṣya-premi-kṛṣṇa-dāsa-gosvāmine tad-anuga-śrīharidāsa-gosvāmine samarpitā śrī-rūpena. tathā hi; śrīmad-gadādharasya svarūpaṁ pūrva-lakṣaṇaṁ,
jānatā śrīla-rūpena sevā tasmai samarpitā.
See also 1st Kakṣā, p. 1;
śrī-caitanya-priyatamaḥ śrīmad- rādhā-gadādharaḥ,
tat-parivāra-rūpasya śrī-govinda-prasevanam.

incarnation of the Lord of golden complexion, was known as the most fortunate scholar (Gadādhara Paṇḍita) and who was a great renunciate, is certainly Rādhā. Narahari Sarkāra, Dāmodara and those who are the Lord's own dear ones all hold this opinion as do I."

Regardless of whether or not the verse is actually Śrī Rūpa's, it shows that the worship of Mahāprabhu as the all-attractive Kṛṣṇa, which was started by Gadādhara and preached by Narahari, had attained a status even in the eyes of the Vṛndāvana devotees.

Conclusion

Acceptance of Viśvambhara Miśra as the supreme god Kṛṣṇa was a sudden occurrence which led to many complications as his followers tried to equate his activities and associates with those of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. The success of the sect in doing so was due to the Vṛndāvana Gosvāmins who followed the now famous verses attributed to Svarūpa Dāmodara upon which Kavirāja Gosvāmin based his whole explanation of Mahāprabhu's *raison d'etre*.

As the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, i. e. Kṛṣṇa endowed with the mood or love that Rādhā had for him, Gaura came to be accepted as an *avatāra* by all varieties of people. He had three desires: to know his own sweetness as Rādhā alone could know it, to experience the unique love Rādhā felt for him and, finally, to know the happiness she felt in loving him. In this incarnation Kṛṣṇa did not come with weapons to destroy the wicked; by showing the perfection of devotional love, he cleansed everyone's heart. He weaved a garland of the names of God, the sweet-smelling flowers of love, and placed it around the necks of the people of a world forgetful of him.

Just as he himself tasted Rādhā's love, it was *rādhā-prema* which was the ultimate object of the devotional path which his followers delineated. The goal of Gauḍīya *sādhana* (practice) is not the service of Kṛṣṇa directly but of Kṛṣṇa through Rādhā. Rādhā is a more important object of worship than

even Kṛṣṇa. The devotees of Vṛndāvana call out; "Jaya Rādhe," as their greeting. Śyāma himself always follows Rādhā. That is the glory of this particular *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa.

Even Balarāma desires Rādhā's mercy. Rādhā perhaps formally has to show respect to her lover's older brother but ultimately she has full control over her Lord. Balarāma has to accept her ultimately as his mother and goddess.[110]

Gadādhara's later *līlā* with Mahāprabhu is no longer available for scrutiny. Jayadeva in his *Caitanya-maṅgala* says that Gaura Hari went to Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha when it was time to leave this world and from there ascended into his eternal abode. Others say he entered into the body of Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha, thus giving himself entirely to Gadādhara as his final act on this earth.

Today worship of Gadādhara or Gadāi-Gaurāṅga has faded into the background, probably due to the overwhelming dominance of the followers of Nityānanda. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, although initiated among the followers of Jāhnavā-Nityānanda (through the descendents of Rāmacandra Gosvāmin who was mentioned previously), was an ardent devotee of Gadādhara whom he would see turn into Rādhā while Gaura in his *naṭa-vara-veśa* turned to Kṛṣṇa. Anaṅga Mañjarī would take him by the hand and would give him over to the Supreme Couple. None of the Pañca Tattva is to be neglected, for all are participants in a *līlā* which is *rādhā-maya.* Rādhā's glories are spread everywhere. One cannot divorce Nityānanda entirely from that spirit for that would ultimately eliminate him from having any real importance in Mahāprabhu's *līlā*. Mahāprabhu is tasting *rādhā-bhāva* and giving it to everyone; why not to his dearest brother Nitāi? But, if one wishes to enter fully the mysteries of *madhura-rasa*, one should follow Rūpa, Svarūpa and the chief among the energies of Gaurāṅga, Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita.

110, *Kṛṣṇa-bhajanāmṛtam*, pp. 15-16. tarhi baladeva-lakṣmaṇayor api śrī-kṛṣṇa-patnyo jānakī-rukmiṇī-rādhādyā mātaraḥ īśvaryaḥ. evaṁ cet śrī-rādhādīnāṁ balarāmādayo 'py anugraha-vāñchakāḥ.

THE GLORIES OF ŚRĪ ADVAITĀCĀRYA

ADVAITA DĀS

ŚRĪ-ŚRĪ-RĀDHĀ-MADANAGOPĀLAḤ ŚARAṆAM

vande taṁ śrīmad-advaitam ācāryam adbhūta-ceṣṭitaṁ
yasya prasādād ajño'pi tat-svarūpaṁ nirūpayet[1]

"I praise Śrī Advaitācārya whose activities are full of wonder and by whose grace even a fool can describe his nature."

Rather than advertising a certain guru or recruiting followers for a particular sect of believers, this little essay aims to establish a broader appreciation for that great divinity who was responsible for creating the religlous renaissance in the age of Kali, i. e. the Hare Kṛṣṇa Saṅkīrtana religion,—Śrī Advaita Ācārya. Since this book is dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the most munificent incarnation of God, the primeval person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the reader might wonder why I say Śrī Advaita Ācārya was responsible for giving *prema*, divine love, to the whole world. It was out of Śrī Advaita Prabhu's unlimited kindness upon, and pity for, suffering humanity that he invoked the advent of Lord Caitanya with offerings of Gaṅgā water and *tulasī* leaves. Just as a person who guides a thirsty man lost in the desert to an oasis is as valuable as the oasis itself, so too Śrī Advaita Prabhu deserves to be called the most munificent personality of God, because he was actually responsible for the Lord's appearance.

Since I am the sole non-Indian representative of the Advaita-parivāra, or disciplic succession coming from Śrī Advaita Ācārya, my guru has made it my duty to glorify Śrī Advaita outside of India. All over the world the glories of Śrīmān Mahāpraphu and Śrī Nityānanda are being sung now, but does anyone appreciate or recognize the significance of Advaita Prabhu's role in establishing this wonderful Hare Kṛṣṇa religion of love? Certainly glorifying Advaita Prabhu would make a significant contribution to the celebration of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's 500th appearance day.

The sources for this essay are all from authoritative, historic

1. C. c., Ādi, 6. 1.

scriptures, like Lauḍīya Kṛṣṇadāsa's *Bālya-līlā-sūtram*,[2] Īśāna Nāgara's *Advaita-prakāśa* (Īśāna Nāgara was a direct disciple of Śrī Advaita Prabhu), as well as, of course, the *Śrī-Caitanya-bhāgavata* and *Śrī-Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

The Appearance of Śrī Advaita Ācārya

It is said in the *Advaita-prakāśa* that Lābhādevī, Advaita Prabhu's mother, had a dream one night. In that dream Lord Sadāśiva, the transcendental deity from Vaikuṇṭha who is the fountainhead of all the forms of Śiva within the innumerable mundane universes, saw the wicked age of Kali, or quarrel, destroying all godly qualities in man.

He became filled with compassion, and, urged by a desire to save humanity from sliding down to hell, he sat down on the shore of the causal ocean, in which Lord Mahāviṣṇu lies in mystic slumber. He performed austerities there for 700 years after which Lord Mahāviṣṇu appeared to him and spoke; "My dear Sadāśiva! Why are you trying to please me with difficult austerities? You and I are one!"[3]

Sadāśiva replied; "My dear Lord, unless you empower me to save suffering mankind, how can I do it? Then Mahāviṣṇu embraced Sadāśiva and thus they took one form in which they would appear on earth as Śrī Advaita Ācārya.[4]

The *Bālya-līlā-sūtra* confirms this as follows; "The almighty Mahāviṣṇu joined together with Lord Śiva with love to relieve the universe from its afflicted condition and they appeared in

2. Acyuta Caraṇa Caudhuri says, in his scholarly introduction to the *Advaita-prakāśa* (ed. M. K. Ghoṣa), that this Lauḍīya Kṛṣṇadāsa was King Divyasiṁha, the king whose minister Advaita Prabhu's father had been. He later handed over the kingdom to his son and went to Śāntipura. After he embraced Vaiṣṇavism his name became Kṛṣṇdāsa and since he had been the king of Lauḍa, he became known as Lauḍīya. He knew all about the childhood of Advaita Prabhu and recorded the incidents in the book called the *Bālya-līlā-sūtram*. (Ed.)

3. A. p., p. 1; yogāsane mahāyogī ārambhila
yoge sapta-śata vatsara atīta haila

4. A. p., pp. 3-4.

the milk ocean of Lābhādevī's womb."[5] The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describes Advaita Prabhu as the incarnation of Mahāviṣṇu,[6] but the prefix *mahat* here means Mahādeva or Śiva. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Advaita Prabhu is also declared to be Lord Śiva incarnate.[7]

Lābhādevī then saw Yama, the son of the sun and the lord of hell, approach the Lord and say; "My dear Lord, if you descend to deliver everyone, then there will be no more work for me punishing sinners in hell!" The Lord consoled Yama, saying; "My dear Yama, do not worry. All those wicked people that purposefully try to avoid the tidal wave of divine love that will inundate the people of Kali, the impersonalists, fruitive workers, false logicians, offenders and atheists, you may take to hell."[8] Hearing this, Yamarāja was satisfied and returned to his abode.

Kuvera Paṇḍita, Advaita's father, was a learned *brāhmaṇa*, an expert in the performance of Vedic sacrifices and a scholar of the Veda. He was born in 1410 A. D. and lived in the Śrīhaṭṭa district (in the present Bānglādesh), in a village named Lauḍa. He was the son of Nṛsiṁha Rājā who came from Śāntipura.

In his previous birth Kuvera Paṇḍita was the celestial treasurer Kuvera, the head of the Guhyakas, or ghostly followers of Lord Śiva. Being a loyal disciple of Lord Śiva, the Lord blessed him by making him his father in his descent on earth as Śrī Advaita Ācārya. In the same way, Lord Rāma blessed his younger brother Lakṣmaṇa to become his older brother in his next two incarnations (Balarāma, the older brother of Śrī

5. B. l. s., p. 23; gopeśvarenādi-śivena sārddhaṁ
   śrīman-mahāviṣṇur ananta-vīryaḥ
   premnā militvā jagad-arti hartuṁ
   lābhodara-kṣīra-nidhau viveśa
6. C. c., Ādi, 1. 12; mahāviṣṇur jagat-kartā māyayā yaḥ sṛjatyadaḥ
   tasyāvatāra evāyam advaitācārya īśvaraḥ
7. C. c., Ādi, 6. 15-17.
8. C. c., Ādi, 7. 29; māyāvādī karma-niṣṭha kutarkika-gaṇa
   nindaka pāṣaṇḍī.

Kṛṣṇa,and Nityānanda, the older brother of Śrī Gaurāṅga in Kali-yuga).

Kuvera Paṇḍita was the royal councillor (*rāja-paṇḍita*) of King Divyasiṁha, the king of Śrīhaṭṭa. Before Advaita, he had fathered six sons; Lakṣmīkānta, Śrīkānta, Harīharānanda, Sadāśiva, Kuśala and Kīrticandra. He also had a daughter who lived for only a short time and who was the incarnation of the Gaṅgā. Of the six boys, four took *sannyāsa* (renunciation) and left home to travel to the holy places; they never again returned. The two remaining sons, elder brothers of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, became householders and their descendants are still living in the present-day Bānglādesh.

Kuvera Paṇḍita was very sad because so many of his sons had left home and took a leave of absence from King Divyasiṁha's service. He went with his wife to Śāntipura in West Bengal. They spent their time there performing austerities on the bank of the Gaṅgā.

There Kuvera Paṇḍita performed a *maunavrata* (vow of silence) and his wife then had the aforementioned dream about Mahāviṣṇu and Śiva. When she told her husband about the dream, he became very happy and thought that the supreme Lord himself would descend into his wife's womb. In Śāntipura, he impregnated his wife and then they returned to Lauḍa. Ever since then Advaita Prabhu was manifest in their minds (the Lord does not reside in ladies' wombs, but dwells in the minds of his parents)[9] and a divine effulgence radiated from their hearts.

All the people of Śrīhaṭṭa happily anticipated the appearance of this divine child, and on Makarī Saptamī, the seventh day of the bright moon in the month of Māgha (January-February) of 1434 A. D. the Lord appeared. All the people were taking bath in the Gaṅgā and the sounds of the holy name of Hari were audible everywhere. The baby was blessed by everyone with a long life and people predicted that he would

9. See *Bhāg*., 10. 2. 16; āviveśāṁśa-bhāgena manaḥ ānakadundubeḥ.

deliver the entire world. During the *annaprāśana* ceremony, in which young babies are fed their first grains and are given a name, the family priest, who was as descendant of Śāṇḍilya Muni, gave him the name "Kamalākṣa" (lotus-eyed).[10] The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* says that he is called Advaita because he is non-different from the Lord[11]. Lābhādevī was very happy and gave a lot of gifts to the priest, and he blessed everyone present.

Advaita, like Nimāi Paṇḍita fifty years later, performed many naughty, childhood sports. He refused to drink from his mother's breast unless she loudly chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa. Nimāi Paṇḍita too refused to drink milk from his mother's breast because according to him she was "impure." This event is significant. So the full story is given here.

When Mahāprabhu refused his mother's breast milk, Advaita Ācārya, who was the initiating guru of both Caitanya Mahāprabhu's parents, was sent for. He asked baby Nimāi why he would not drink his mother's breast milk. In response the Lord said; "She is impure because she is not properly initiated." Advaita then asked the boy; "What do you mean by that?" The Lord said; "You have not given her initiation in the 32-syllable Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*."[12] Advaita Prabhu then initiated Mother Śacī into the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and Nimāi accepted her breast milk. In this way Lord Caitanya himself taught, through Advaita Prabhu, the significance of *harināma* initiation. This belies the opinion of some who think that this initiation is unnecessary or not ordained by scripture. Actually, without the grace of the preceptor nothing can be accomplished in spiritual life. Therefore the relationship with him should extend even to such an 'informal' thing as the Hare Kṛṣṇa initiation.

10. C. c., Ādi, 6. 30; kamala-nayaner teṇho yāte aṅga-aṁśa,
kamalākṣa bali dhare nāme avataṁśa.
11. C. c., Ādi, 1. 13 and 6. 5; advaitaṁ hariṇādvaitād.
12. hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare.

One night, Mother Lābhā had a dream in which she saw Kamalākṣa take her to a high mountain in the Śrīhaṭṭa area on the day called 'Vāruṇī-snāna.' This is an auspicious day in the month of Madhu or Caitra (March-April), the 13th day of the bright moon. Lābhādevī had long desired to take bath in all the holy rivers of India, so on this ausp'cious day Kamalākṣa took her to this mountain in dream to fulfil her blessed desire. All the holy rivers appeared before Kamalākṣa in personified forms and offered prayer to him. Kamalākṣa was shining in the divine four-armed form of Mahāviṣṇu. With conch shells sounding, the rivers ascended the mountain and then began to shower Mother Lābhā. Kamalākṣa said; "Look, Mother, there is the red Sarasvatī water, the white Gaṅgā, the black Yamunā as well as the Kāverī, Narmadā and Godāvarī." This incident is remembered today in Śrīhaṭṭa on the day called Vāruṇī-snāna.

Through his childhood sports Kamalākṣa showed that he was Śiva incarnate. Lord Śiva is also known as Rudra, the god of anger. This anger enables him to destroy the whole universe at the time of destruction (*pralaya*). Haricaraṇa Dāsa mentions in his *Advaita-maṅgala* that Kamalākṣa was playing with the son of King Divyasiṁha in a cave one day. The prince began to mock devotees who chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Kamalākṣa became so angry that the prince fainted out of shock. Similarly, in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* it is said that Advaita Prabhu, called Rudra incarnate, vowed to destroy all the atheists.[13]

Advaita's Paugaṇḍa Sports

In his *paugaṇḍa* age (5-10 years), Kamalākṣa played his *vidyā-vilāsa* (sport of learning) very much like Nimāi Paṇḍita would do later. When Kamalākṣa was five years old, he got the *khaḍi* or chalk placed in his hand which ceremonially begins a

13. C. bh., Ādi, 11. 62; śuniyā advaita haya rudra avatāra,
saṁhārimu saba bali' karaye huṅkāra.

child's education. When his parents, however, asked him what he had learned at school, he would not say a word.

King Divyasiṁha was a devotee of goddess Durgā and the prince once visited a Durgā temple with Kamalākṣa. Kamalākṣa entered the temple in an arrogant mood saying; "Show me your goddess!" When he came before the deity he refused to bow down. The prince became offended and Kamalākṣa became so angry at this that the prince fell unconscious out of shock. Playing the *līlā* of a little child, Kamalākṣa ran off and hid himself. With great difficulty some village boys managed to find him and bring him back to the temple where the king was waiting with Kuvera Paṇḍita and other leading citizens. The king was very distressed to see his apparently dead son, but Kamalākṣa sprinkled some *caraṇāmṛta*, water which has washed Lord Viṣṇu's lotus feet, over the prince's head. The prince came back to his senses. Everyone was amazed at seeing Kamalākṣa's mystic powers.

On a second occasion when the prince took Kamalākṣa to the Durgā temple, on the auspicious day of Dīpāvalī when candles are offered to goddess Durgā in all Hindu homes, Kamalākṣa again refused to bow down to Durgā. The prince again became disturbed and called for Kamalākṣa's father. When Kuvera Paṇḍita arrived, he had a discussion with his son on the subject of demigod worship. He told his son that even Lord Rāma had worshiped the goddess Durgā to get his kidnapped wife, Sītādevī, back.

Kamalākṣa politely folded his hands and said; "Dear father, excuse me, but let me tell you; 'Just as a tree is nourished with all its branches, leaves and twigs only when its roots are watered, when the primeval Lord Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa is worshiped, automatically all the secondary gods are satisfied.'" With this example from *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* Kamalākṣa satisfied all those who witnessed the argument.[14] He went on to say; "As the

14. *Bhāg*. 4. 31. 141 ; yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena,
tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopaśākhāḥ,
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyānāṁ
tathāpi sarvārhanam acyutejyā.

Cakora bird can only live on moonlight, I can only worship Lord Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa!"

Just then the Durgā image burst into pieces and the goddess came out of it, illuminating the ten directions.[15] A voice in the sky then said; "The husband will never bow down to the wife!" Thus it was indicated that the boy Kamalākṣa was none other than Durgā's husband, Lord Śiva.

Seeing this, the king understood that he had committed an offense and that Kamalākṣa was Śaṅkara (Śiva) himself. He then offered appropriate prayers to the Lord, and Kamalākṣa warned the king that his son was mocking the Vaiṣṇavas and that he himself was a demigod worshiper. Since Durgā is merely Kṛṣṇa's maidservant, his external energy, who keeps everyone in the tight grip of illusion, his kingdom could never flourish through such a worship.

Kamalākṣa, satisfied with the king's prayers, placed his feet on the king's head and requested him to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. The king became a Vaiṣṇava and established a large Kṛṣṇa temple in his kingdom. He arranged for great festivals on the Vaiṣṇava celebration days and ultimately took initiation from Kamalākṣa, who gave him the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Brahmacārī. This Kṛṣṇadāsa renounced the world and became a mendicant in Vṛndāvana.[16]

After this Kamalākṣa went with his parents to Śāntipura, the place from which his father's family came. He lived by the side of the Gaṅgā and, in school, told all his classmates that the holy names of Kṛṣṇa are the source of all knowledge. He studied the *ṣaḍ-darśana* (six Vedic philosophical systems) and *śruti* (the *Veda*) and mastered all the subjects within two or three years. He received the title *veda-pañcānana*, an advanced degree in Vedic scholarship, at the age of eight. His teacher,

15. B. 1. s., p. 45; ityukta tejasā dīptā
śaila-mūrtiṁ vidārya sā,
vinirgatā mahāmāyā
bhāsayantī diśo daśaḥ.

16. See footnote number two.

Śāntācārya, lived in the village of Pūrṇāvatī and according to Vedic custom, Kamalākṣa spent his student days in his teacher's hermitage. It was Śāntācārya who gave Kamalākṣa the name Advaita in a name-giving ceremony.

Śānta was aware of his pupil's divinity and wanted to 'reveal it through a miracle' to Advaita's classmates, who were envious of his showing him favour. One day Śāntācārya was walking in the forest with his students when they came to a lake filled with beautiful lotus flowers but full of big fearsome snakes as well. Śānta pointed to a platform in the middle of that lake with a big extraordinarily beautiful lotus flower on it. He asked his students who among them could cross the water to fetch him that big lotus. Everyone was silent, but Kamalākṣa stepped forward and volunteered. He entered the water and at every step a lotus popped up to carry him and, at the same time, a big snake rose out of the water and spread its hood to shade him like the celestial snake Ananta shades Lord Viṣṇu. In this way Kamalākṣa safely reached the platform and picked the lotus to give to his teacher. His fellow students were amazed and always respected Advaita from that time on.

Advaita's Kaiśora and Yauvana Sports[17]

When Advaita Prabhu reached his teens his parents, both aged ninety, went to Śrī Vaikuṇṭha Purī in a transcendental flower airplane, leaving behind this material world.[18] Advaita, as part of his *līlā*, mourned his parents' demise and then went on pilgrimage. He first went to Remuna (Orissa), where, in great ecstasy, he saw the Gopīnātha deity. He then went to Nābhigayā, Purī, Godāvarī, Śivakāñchī and Viṣṇukāñchī (where he was amused to see a competition between the Śaivites and the Vaiṣṇavas), Kāverī, Dakṣiṇa Mathurā (Madurāi), Setubandha,

17. *Kaiśora* is ages 10 to 15 years and *yauvana* is 16 years and over.
18. This is a Vaiṣṇava, euphemistic way of saying that Advaita's parents died. (Ed.)

Dhanutīrtha, Rāmeśvara and Madhvācārya's center, Uḍipī. There he first met Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī who would later become his preceptor. Mādhavendra Purī was very happy to find in Advaita a passionate devotee like himself, and they discussed together the dire need of an incarnation in this age of Kali. Advaita then predicted the advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Mādhavendra Purī. Finally, one morning, Advaita left and continued on to Daṇḍakāraṇya, Nāsika, Dvārakā, Prabhāsa Tīrtha, Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra, Haridvāra, Badarikāśrama, Gomukhi, Gandakī and Mithilā. In Mithilā, he saw the birth place of Sītādevī (the wife of Lord Rāma). Seeing the spot, Advaita shed tears of love. He saw a *brāhmaṇa* sitting under a *vaṭa* (banyan) tree giving the most beautiful poetic descriptions of Kṛṣṇa. Upon inquiry, the man identified himself as the poet Vidyāpati, who wrote some of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's favourite devotional poetry. Advaita was pleased to meet with him and then proceeded to Ayodhyā, the eternal abode of Lord Rāma.

In Vārāṇasī he bathed in the famous Maṇikarṇikā Ghāṭa and saw the deity Viśvanātha (Lord Śiva), the main deity of Vārāṇasī. He joyfully visited the temple of Ādikeśava and also saw the deity Bindu Mādhava. Then he travelled to Prayāga (Allahabad), where he saw the Veṇi Mādhava deity. He shaved his head and bathed in the Triveṇi, the meeting place of the Sarasvatī, Gaṅgā and Yamunā rivers. He next went to Mathurā, where he visited the house of Kṛṣṇa's lover, Kubjā. He offered his obeisances to the Janmasthāna (the birth site of Kṛṣṇa) and took bath in Viśrāma Ghāṭa. He then performed the whole *parikrama* (pilgrimage tour) of Vraja, remembering Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* at each site, and finally arrived in Vṛndāvana. He resided at the foot of Dvādaśāditya-ṭilā the hill where Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmin later had the famous Madanamohana temple built. The place where Advaita Prabhu lived is still preserved and can be visited even today. It is called "Advaita Vaṭa."

One day when Advaita was sleeping under a banyan tree the

Madanagopāla deity appeared to him in a dream and said; "I was being worshiped here, but the priest left me and fled out of fear of Muslim invaders. I am hidden at Dvādaśāditya-tilā under the present flow of the Yamunā. Please dig me up and install me again. Advaita Prabhu found the site, unearthed the deity and installed it again with the help of some local Vrajavāsīs (residents of Vraja). They performed a bath ceremony (*abhiṣeka*) and Advaita Prabhu rubbed Madanagopāla's body so thoroughly that the Lord regained his original smooth, blackish complexion. Later, when Advaita Prabhu was out one day some Muslims came and attacked Advaita Vaṭa. The deity hid himself under a heap of old sanctified flowers (flowers that were previously offered to the Lord) and thus was not destroyed. When Advaita Prabhu returned, Madanagopāla again told him in a dream where he had hidden himself. He requested Advaita Prabhu to dig him up and give him to Puruṣottama Chobey to serve. This Puruṣottama Chobey was a *brāhmaṇa* from Mathurā who later gave Madangopāla to Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmin to serve.

The Lord told Advaita Prabhu that he should return to Śāntipura and install a dual deity (*yugala-mūrti*) there of Śrī Rādhā and Madanagopāla having them carved according to a picture which was painted by Rādhārāṇī's dear friend Viśākhā. That picture was hidden in Sevākuñja and Madanagopāla revealed its location to Advaita Prabhu. It is interesting to note that Advaita Prabhu is Viśākhā in Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*. Advaita Prabhu is present in all four *rasas* or spiritual moods in Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana *līlā*: *madhura-rasa* (Viśākhādevī), *vātsalya-rasa* (Paurṇamāsī, Madhumaṅgala's grandmother), *sakhya-rasa* (Madumaṅgala) and *dāsya-rasa* (Rati Mañjarī). Viśākhā once showed that same picture to Rādhā to relieve her from the pain of her separation from Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmin describes this in his *Vidagdha-mādhava*. Śrī Rādhā said to Viśākhā; "With the beauty of his smile (in his picture) and the casting of his glance, he has driven me mad! Alas! (Ever since I have seen that picture) the

cool moon seems as hot as fire and fire seems as cool as the moon!"[19]

Mādhavendra Purī came to Vṛndāvana and met Advaita Prabhu. He was very happy to hear of Madangopāla's order and explained to Advaita the inappropriateness of the worship of Kṛṣṇa without Rādhā, since Kṛṣṇa can never be happy without her company. She is his pleasure-giving potency, the *hlādinī-śakti.* It is explained in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*[20] that she is the full energy and Kṛṣṇa's is the full energetic. In the *Govinda-līlāmṛtam* the same author, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmin, writes; "Who is the birthplace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love? It is only Śrīmatī Rādhikā and no one else."[21] Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmin writes that those who worship only Kṛṣṇa without Rādhā are *kapaṭi* (deceitful) and *dambha* (proud), and Śrila Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī says that anyone who worships Kṛṣṇa without Rādhā desires to see the full moon night without the moon, and anyone who does not know the seed of devotion to Kṛṣṇa (Śrī Rādhā) has reached the ocean of nectar but only tasted a drop (through accepting only Śrī Kṛṣṇa as worshipable).[22]

Mādhavendra Purī then told Advaita he should get married in order to become qualified for the service to the dual deity. One might wonder why Mādhavendra Purī suggested that recluses and bachelors are unqualified for deity worship. The reason is that a recluse is guilty of an offence if he neglects to worship the deity due to disease or death. He will have to suffer the reactions to such an offense in his next birth. A

19. V. m. n., 2. 3; bhruvaṁ te tena kṣiptvā kim api hāsatonmādita-mateḥ
 śaśī-vṛtto vahniḥ param ahaha vahnir mama śaśī.
20. C. c., Ādi, 4. 9; rādhā pūrṇa śakti kṛṣṇa pūrṇa śaktimān.
21. G. l., 11. 122; kā kṛṣṇasya praṇaya-janibhuḥ śrīmatī-rādhikaikā
 kāsya preyasyānupama-guṇā rādhikaikā na cānyā.
22. R. r. s., 80; rādhā-dāsyam apāsya yaḥ prayatate govinda-saṅgasya
 so' yaṁ pūrṇa-sudhā-ruceḥ paricayaṁ rākaṁ vinā kāṅkṣati
 kiṁ ca śyāma-rati-pravāha-laharī-bījaṁ na ye taṁ viduḥ
 te prāpyāpi mahāmṛtāmbudhim aho binduṁ paraṁ
 prāpnuyuḥ.

householder, though, always has his wife, children and other relatives around to take over the service of the deity if he falls ill or dies. Nevertheless, Mādhavendra Purī generously announced that he would take upon himself the reactions to any offenses made to the deity by the next 14 generations of Advaita Prabhu's family (the Advaita Vaṁśa). This was the first reason why Advaita Prabhu got married and created the Advaita family lineages. Another reason was, as Nityānanda Prabhu did later, to spread the *yuga-dharma* (religious practice for the present age) of Caitanya Mahāprabhu to society at large, i. e. the householders, rather than just to a select group of recluses and transcendentalists. There was, of course, no question of any sensual desire on the Advaita Prabhu's part. He was 50 years old when he entered household life, and he had been a spotless recluse until then.

Mādhavendra Purī stayed with Advaita Prabhu in Śāntipura for one month and instructed him that the chanting of the holy name was the only way of deliverance in the present age of Kali and that this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* was recommended in the *Agni Purāṇa* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*. Then he gave initiation to Advaita Prabhu.

There are a few more stories from the period before Advaita Prabhu's marriage. Once after he defeated in debate a champion scholar, a voice in the sky announced; "This *brāhmaṇa* is not an ordinary man. He is God himself. Because nobody is more learned than him, his name is Advaita (which means unrivalled also)."[23]

Advaita Prabhu met Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the outcaste devotee who was fully devoted to chanting the holy names of Hari. In his previous birth, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe. Brahmā had been forced to take birth in a Muslim family as a result of his offence of stealing the cows and cowherd boys from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This incident is narrated

23. C. c., Antya, 7. 18; sarva-śāstre kṛṣṇa-bhaktye nāhi yāra sama,
ataeva advaita ācārya tāra nāma.

in the thirteenth chapter of the Tenth Canto of *Bhāgavata Purāṇa.* He was born in 1451 A. D. in present-day Bānglādesh in a place now named after him, Haridāsapura. Although born in a Muslim family, Hardāsa never ate contaminated (non-vegetarian) foods, but lived on milk until he was five years old. When he was five years old, he left home and went to see Advaita Prabhu, under whom he studied Sanskrit and all the scriptures. Advaita Prabhu requested him to shave his head and wear a loincloth (*ḍor-kaupin*) as well as *tilaka* and *tulasī* neckbeads, thus dressing him like a Vaiṣṇava. By this example which is cited in the *Advaita-prakāśa,* Advaita Prabhu taught the world that the wearing of Vaiṣṇava dress is the right of men of all castes, creeds and races.

Advaita Prabhu taught Haridāsa Ṭhākura the meaning of every syllable of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra.* One day Advaita Prabhu held a public ceremony in which oblations (*śrāddha*) were offered to his ancestors. All the leading *brāhmaṇas* from Navadvīpa were invited as was Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Advaita Prabhu neglected the ritual custom of giving *brāhmaṇas* the first offering of the remnants of the *śrāddha.* Instead he gave it to Haridāsa, the 'outcaste.' Upon seeing this, all the *brāhmaṇas* at once left the assembly in protest and returned home without eating anything. When they arrived home, though, there was nothing for them to eat there either, as their wives had not cooked for them, thinking they would eat at Advaita Prabhu's house. Mysteriously none of the wives were able to light their stoves to cook that day. In this way, all the respectable citizens of Navadvīpa had to fast the rest of the day for the offense they committed to Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Śrī Advaita Prabhu. They quickly returned to Advaita Prabhu's house and apologized. Haridāsa Ṭhākura once assumed his original form of Lord Brahmā while sitting in his cave and emanated fire from each of his four mouths. After the people saw this, they were all convinced of his divinity and gave up their enmity towards him.

With Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Advaita Prabhu organized *saṅkīr-*

tana in Navadvīpa, and Advaita Prabhu later tried to encourage Nimāi Paṇḍita to join that *saṅkīrtana* when Nimāi was in his sport of learning and pretended to be uninterested in *saṅkīrtana*.

Before his marriage, Advaita Prabhu initiated the foremost associates of Mahāprabhu, like Vāsudeva Datta, Bhāgavatācārya Śyāmadāsa, Yadunandanācārya (the guru of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmin) as well as Caitanya Mahāprabhu's parents.

Advaita Prabhu's Līlā in Old Age

Nṛsiṁha Bhāduḍī was a learned and renounced *brāhmaṇa* of the Nārāyaṇapura in Saptagrāma. His daughter Sītā was like the goddess of fortune churned from the nectar ocean of that *brāhmaṇa* community. She is, according to *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* by Kavi Karṇapūra, Yogamāyā, the mystic potency of the Lord.[24] One might wonder why both Advaita Prabhu and Sītādevī were called Yogamāyā-Paurṇamāsī. The reason is that Sītā and Advaita are one principle divided into two forever, just like Nityānanda and his wife Jāhnavā who are both said to be Anaṅga Mañjarī, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's younger sister.

Sītādevī appeared in this world in the month of Bhādra (September) four days before Rādhāṣṭamī, the appearance day of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. She first saw her lord (husband) while crossing the Gaṅgā on a boat with her father and her younger sister, Śrīdevī. Nṛsiṁha Bhāduḍī and his daughters were very happy to see the stout, beautiful, golden form of Advaita Prabhu performing his worship on the bank of the Gaṅgā. On another occasion Nṛsiṁha Bhāduḍī took his daughters to Śāntipura to perform worship of Bhagavatī. Sītādevī's eyes met with Advaita's eyes and they admired each other. Śyāmadāsa then proposed the wedding to Nṛsiṃha Bhāduḍī. "Your daughter is Yogamāyā and Advaita is God himself! What could be a

24. G. g. d., 86; yogamāyā bhagavatī gṛhiṇī tasya sāmpratam,
sītā-rūpenavatirṇā śrī-nāmnā tat-prakāśataḥ.

better match?" The bride was given away at Phuliyāghāṭa on the bank of the Gaṅgā. Later Nṛsiṁha Bhāduḍī also gave his younger daughter, Śrīdevī, in marriage to Advaita.

One day during a festival, Nṛsiṁha Bhāduḍī, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Sītādevī and Śrīdevī saw Advaita Prabhu cooking with four hands, just as Lord Nityānanda once did later. Sītādevī always gave great pleasure to Advaita Prabhu with her cooking. She was an expert cook. One day she was serving rice to Advaita Prabhu and all his disciples when her hair braid fell loose. She held up her braid with two hands and continued serving the rice with another two hands. Everyone was astonished to see this divine mystery, so Advaita Prabhu admonished her, saying; "O Sītā, is this preaching in Kali Yuga?" She made the extra two hands vanish. Mādhavendra Purī appeared to her in a dream once and gave her initiation. When Advaita Prabhu heard about this, he gave her initiation again, despite Sītā's vision. This was in deference to the scriptural rule that one is considered initiated only when the preceptor whispers or speaks the sacred syllables directly into the disciple's right ear in a solitary place. Nowadays, some Vaiṣṇavas initiate disciples by mail or with a taperecorder, but Advaita Prabhu's example makes it clear that this practice is not approved and that anyone initiating in this way is not making any real disciples.

Advaita Prabhu initiated his two young wives just like Paurṇamāsī-Yogamāyā gave intitiation to the two young *dūtīs* (girl-messengers of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) Vīrā and Vṛndā. He then instructed them about the highest form of *upāsanā* (meditation), that of being Rādhārāṇī's maid servants (*mañjarīs*). This is the *upāsanā* taught by all the *ācāryas* (teachers) of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. It is not concocted or a practice of Sahajiyās as some say, for the evidence of it is found in the *Pātāla Khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*, Chapter 52;

ātmānaṁ cintayet tatra tāsāṁ madhye manoramāṁ
rūpa-yauvana-sampannāṁ kiśorīṁ pramadākṛtim
nānā-śilpa-kalābhijñāṁ kṛṣṇa-bhogānurūpinīṁ
prathitām api kṛṣṇena tatra bhoga-parāṅmukhīm

rādhikānucārīṁ nityaṁ tat-sevana-parāyaṇāṁ
kṛṣṇād apyadhikaṁ prema rādhikāyāṁ prakūrvatīm
prītyānudivasaṁ yatnāt tayoḥ saṅgama-kāriṇīṁ
tat-sevana-sukhāsvāda-bhāvenātisunirvṛtām.

"One should think of oneself as a young teenage girl with a form that is very pleasing. She is expert in all arts and crafts for the enjoyment of Kṛṣṇa, but she is averse to personal enjoyment with him, even if requested by Kṛṣṇa. She is always a follower of Rādhā and is devoted to her service only. She loves Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa. Everyday she works with love to bring about the meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and is always steeped in the joy of their service."[25]

Without receiving this *upāsanā* from the preceptor, the teacher-pupil relationship is merely external and physical and the pupil will not be able to attain perfection (*siddhi*) through his service to the preceptor. This is very important, because the sole factor for success in spiritual life is the grace of the preceptor upon the practicing disciple. In *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, it is stated that the preceptor should indicate the *upāsanā* and the *iṣṭa-devatā* (or chosen deity) for the student;[26]

anye ca saṁskṛtātmāno vidhinābhihitena te
yajanti tvan-mayās tvāṁ vai bahu-mūrtyaika-mūrtikam

"And others, whose minds are purified by the prescribed means, being absorbed in you, worship through many forms you who have one form."

The word *saṁskṛta* means 'initiated' and *abhihita* means 'declared' or 'told.' *Bahu-mūrtyaika-mūrtikam* means that although God has many forms, one should select one of those forms as one's sole object of worship and meditation. This is called *niṣṭhā* or having fixed faith and is also recommended in *Bhagavad-gītā*.[27] The individual living being (*jīva*) is eternally

25. P. p., 4. 52. 7-10.
26. Bhāg., 10 40. 7.
27. Bh. g., 2. 41; vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kurunadana,
bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca buddhayo' vyavasāyinām.

indivisible and can only have a relationship with one of the forms of God.[28]

Another important thing that we can learn from this verse of *Bhāgavata* is that one should not concoct a spiritual body for oneself but should follow the prescribed rule (*vidhi*) of receiving it from the preceptor. In this way, the relationship with one's preceptor becomes eternal, perfect and complete. It is not a fact that the spiritual body or *siddha-deha* comes to exist only after the student's liberation from material bondage. It exists within the physical body of the student as a 'shadow' or second form. This is taught by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmin in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.[29] After meditating on one's *siddha-deha* throughout one's life, the student will become identified with it. Then, when he leaves his material body, he will attain his desired destination through that constant meditation.[30]

As such, there is not even a need for the preceptor to give a 'spiritual' name to the pupil's physical body because the pupil already has attained an eternal spiritual identity. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Mahāprabhu tells Haridāsa Ṭhākura; 'At the time of initiation the student surrenders everything to the guru. At that time Kṛṣṇa considers him to be equal to himself. The body of the devotee is transcendental, consisting of consciousness and joy. It is never material."[31] Most people mistakenly think this applies to the student's mortal, physical body, but persons who know of the *siddha-deha* know that it applies to the spiritual body.

There is no need to interpret the verse *sarva-dharmān pari-*

28. *Ibid.*, 2. 24; acchedyo 'yam.
29. B. r. s., 1. 2. 295; sevā sādhaka-rūpena
 siddha-rūpena cātra hi.
30. Bh. g., 8. 6; taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya
 sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitah.
31. C. c., Antya, 4. 191-192;
 prabhu kahe, vaṣṇava-deha prākṛta kabhu naya.
 aprākṛta deha bhakter cid-ānanda-maya.
 dīkṣākāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa,
 sei kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama.

tyajya in the *Gītā* (18.66) to mean that one should turn society upside down by denying one's social position, making outcastes into *brāhmaṇas* and *sannyāsins* into householders again, or by mixing all castes and races in a new, liberal marriage system. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya*, the Lord's final order, is an internal, spiritual one. There is no caste distinction in the perfected stage in the spiritual world. Rūpa Gosvāmin taught this practice to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmin in his spiritual form as Rūpa Mañjarī. After having realised all of Rūpa Gosvāmin's teachings, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmin addresses him (or her) as '*sakhī*' (female friend) in his ultimate manifesto the *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali.*[32] This means that there is no reverential relationship between teacher and pupil any more in the perfected stage. In the material world, however, etiquette (*maryādā*) should be maintained, as Lord Caitanya himself has advised.[33]

Advaita Prabhu was very sorry to see the complete absence of spiritual or devotional consciousness in the people of his time. He offered flowers to the Gaṅgā and these flowers floated downstream and touched the body of mother Śacī, who was bathing there. As a result of this, her son Viśvarūpa (Mahāprabhu's elder brother), an incarnation of Śaṅkarṣaṇa, was born. The scriptures say that the Lord, who is very kind to his devotees, offers himself to whomever offers him even a mere *tulasī* leaf or a spoon full of water.[34] Knowing this Advaita Prabhu sat down on the bank of the Gaṅgā, and his whole body shivering and perspiring with ecstasy, he called for the Lord to descend with offerings of Gaṅgā water and *tulasī* leaves. It was through Advaita Prabhu that the Lord appeared, and it was through him also that the Lord preached the congregational chanting and delivered the whole

32. V. k., 1; tvaṁ rūpa-mañjarī sakhi prathitā pure 'smin.
33. C. c., Antya, 4. 130; tathāpi bhakter svabhāva maryādārakṣaṇa.
34. *Gautamīya Tantra;* tulasī-dala-mātrena jalasya culukena vā,
vikrīṇite svam ātmānaṁ bhaktebhyo bhaktyā vatsalaḥ.

world.[35] It is only through the grace of Śrī Advaita that the untouchables can become devotees of Kṛṣṇa. Who can estimate his Viṣṇuite power?[36]

When Mahāprabhu descended in Navadvīpa, Advaita Prabhu was already settled in Śāntipura, but he would come regularly to see the Lord. The *Caitanya-bhāgavata* relates that when Mahāprabhu showed his first divine opulences (*mahā-prakāśa*) in the house of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, Rāmāi Paṇḍita came to Śāntipura and told Advaita Prabhu about it. Advaita immediately came to Navadvīpa with his *pūjā* paraphernalia to perform the first worship of Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the house of Nandana Ācārya.

Advaita Prabhu worshiped the Lord with the verse;

namo brahmaṇya-devāya go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca
jagad-dhitāya kṛṣṇāya govindāya namo namaḥ.[37]

"My repeated obeisances to Kṛṣṇa who is Govinda, the Lord of the *brāhmaṇas*, the friend of the cow and the *brāhmaṇa* and the benefactor of the universe." He never used any new *mantra* or a separate *mantra* for the worship of Lord Caitanya. He never saw any difference between Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Kṛṣṇa. Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is *svayaṁ kṛṣṇa* (Kṛṣṇa himself), and not an incarnation like Rāma or Nṛsiṁha, so Advaita did not think it necessary to worship Mahāprabhu as anyone other than Kṛṣṇa.

Advaita Prabhu's first son, Acyutānanda, was born in 1493 A. D., seven years after Mahāprabhu was born, and Balarāma, Gopāla, Kṛṣṇadāsa and the twins Jagadīśa and Svarūpa were born in intervals of four years. Ultimately Advaita Prabhu rejected three of his sons for deviating from the path of Mahā-

35. C. c., Adi, 6. 33-34; yāhār tulasī-jale yāhār huṇkāre,
svagaṇa sahita caitanyer avatāra.
yār dvārā kaila prabhu kīrtana pracāra,
yār dvārā kaila prabhu jagat nistāra.

36. C. c., Antya, 7. 19; yāhār kṛpāte mleccher haya kṛṣṇa-bhakti,
ke kahite pāre tār vaiṣṇavatā śakti.

37. Viṣṇu Purāṇa,?.

prabhu and accepted three: Acyuta, Gopāla and Kṛṣṇa Miśra. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa Miśra were the only two sons of Advaita who entered household life; the other four became *sannyāsins* (renunciates). All the children took initiation from their mother, Sītādevī. Śrīdevī had only one baby which died immediately after birth. Thus, of the two branches of Advaita Prabhu's family, Miśra Gosvāmin's alone is to be accepted as teaching orthodox Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism.

Advaita Prabhu, or 'Sītānātha,' as he is also often called, was always eager to receive the dust of Nimāi Paṇḍita's feet, but Nimāi always treated Prabhu Sītānātha as his worshipable superior. Therefore, Prabhu Sītānātha used a trick to obtain Nimāi's foot-dust. He began to preach impersonalist (*māyāvādī*) philosophy in Śāntipura. Nityānanda aud Gaurāṅga became furious and came from Navadvīpa to see him. Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita had reported to Mahāprabhu that when he asked Advaita Prabhu; "Are we all God?" Prabhu Sītānātha replied; "Yes," and then showed Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita his four-armed form and later also a six-armed form. Mahāprabhu was amused when he heard it, but pretended to be in the angry mood of Lord Narasiṁha and rushed to Śāntipura. There he knocked down the door of Prabhu Sītānātha's temple and found him preaching his impersonalism. He asked Prabhu Sītānātha three times; "*jñāna-vāda vā bhakti-vāda* (Is devotion the best or monism?)," and three times Advaita replied; "*Jñāna!*" Then Mahāprabhu kicked him on the back with his lotus feet. In this way Prabhu Sītānātha happily received the Lord's mercy.

When Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa* (renunciation) Mother Śacī accused Advaita Ācārya, her guru, of first convincing her first son Viśvarūpa to leave her and take *sannyāsa* and now taking away her last child in the same way. For this offence to her guru, Nimāi had her touch Prabhu Sītānātha's lotus feet, and then Nimāi gave her the gift of divine love (*prema-dhana*).

Sītādevī was able to serve unlimited amounts of *prasāda* when Gaura and Nitāi and all the devotees would eat in her house. Sītānātha's storehouse seemed to be inexhaustible.

Once Sītādevī expanded herself into as many forms as there were guests in order to serve everybody according to their liking, just as Kṛṣṇa expanded himself in the *rāsa* (circle) dance to satisfy each *gopī* (cowherd girl).

One day the three Lords – Nitāi, Gaura and Sītānātha – desired the play Kṛṣṇa's toll sport or *dāna-līlā*. Advaita played Kṛṣṇa, Mahāprabhu played Rādhā and Nityānanda played the *gopīs*' older governess who accompanied them. Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and other devotees played the *gopīs*, and Kamalākānta, Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita and others played the cowherd boys. They dressed themselves up and hired a boat on the bank of the Gaṅgā. They decorated the boat as well as the *ghāṭa* (bathing-place) with sandalwood paste, vermillion and flower garlands. Kṛṣṇa and his cowherd boys all had sticks, flutes and buglehorns. They stopped playing on their horns when they saw Śrī Rādhikā and her friends coming with big earthen pots on their heads. The old lady (Nitāi) announced; "We are on our way to Mathurā to sell our curd, milk and sweetrice!" Subala said; "Why have you come here? You must pay tax here!" Then Kṛṣṇa came forward and said; "Yes, you must pay." The *gopīs* tried to settle for four coins a head, but Kṛṣṇa wanted eight, so the *gopīs* said; "You're supposed to be a king's son, Kṛṣṇa! Aren't you ashamed? Don't you have enough money already? Let us pass at once!" Then Kṛṣṇa replied; "Well, since all of you *gopīs* have such heavy breasts and buttocks, it will not be possible for me to take more than one of you on my boat at a time. My boat leaks, you see!" Nitāi, as the older *gopī*, then began to scold Kṛṣṇa saying; "Let us pass immediately, otherwise our curd and milk will go sour!" But Kṛṣṇa insisted on a double fee for the overweight caused by the *gopīs*' breasts, buttocks and ornaments, and threatened to smash the pots on their heads with his stick if they did not pay. Then the three Lords jumped in the water in ecstasy and played there, while Murāri and Mukunda did *kīrtana* on the bank.

After taking *sannyāsa* Mahāprabhu took his first *bhikṣā*

(begged meal) from Sītānātha's house in Śāntipura and stayed there on Sītānātha's request so that Mahāprabhu's mother and all the devotees from Navadvīpa would have a chance to say farewell to him. After Mahāprabhu settled down in Purī, it was Advaita Prabhu who led the annual pilgrimage of the Bengali devotees to see the Lord during the four months of the rainy season. In 1534 A. D., Mahāprabhu ended his manifest *līlā* by entering into the temple room of Lord Jagannātha in a mood of ecstasy. The doors spontaneously closed behind him and when they opened again there was no trace of the Lord. The news reached Śāntipura and Advaita Prabhu fainted when he heard it. He and his whole family, feeling separation from Mahāprabhu, cried; no one can properly describe their lamentation. Advaita Prabhu organised a huge festival to which he invited all the devotees.

Actually, this separation was an illusion created by Advaita Prabhu who is after all Yogamāyā, the mystic illusion incarnate. Previously Advaita had sent a *prahelī* or riddle to Mahāprabhu in Purī, in which he told the Lord to finish his manifest *līlā* because his ecstatic transformations, like banging his head against the wall, etc., were causing the Lord too much hardship. This feeling of Advaita Prabhu was not a mundane sentiment, but a transcendental affection. In this same mood Śacīmātā would almost faint from distress when she saw her Nimāi falling on the floor in ecstasy in Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's house.

In this way Advaita Prabhu was responsible for both the appearance and the disappearance of the Lord. The riddle runs as follows;

bāulke kahiya loka haila āula,
bāulke kahiya hāṭe nā vikāya cāula,
bāulke kahiya kāje nāhika āula,
bāulke kahiya ihā kahiyāche bāula.[33]

"Tell the madman that all the people have gone mad (meaning: everyone here has attained the wealth of divine love). Tell the

38. C. c., Antya, 19. 20-21.

madman that there is no rice for sale on the market (meaning: everyone has lost interest in material enjoyment). Tell the madman that there is no more work (meaning: there is no more reason for the Lord to stay on earth). Tell the madman that this was spoken by a similar madman (meaning: I have also attained divine love, *prema*)."

This verse, brought to Mahāprabhu by Jagadānanda Paṇḍita, is not often understood, but it shows that Advaita Prabhu was coordinating Mahāprabhu's *līlā* just as Yogamāyā coordinates Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*. It also shines as a 'cry of love,' a simple manifesto of *prema*, the highest goal of human life.

According to Īśāna Nāgara's *Advaita-prakāśa*, Advaita Prabhu's son Kṛṣṇa Miśra had a son just after Mahāprabhu's disappearance and Advaita accepted this child, named Raghunātha, as a manifestation of Mahāprabhu because he had the same complexion as the Lord. Then, after Nityānanda's disappearance, Kṛṣṇa Miśra had another son, named Dola Govinda, who was similarly accepted as an expansion of Nityānanda. Mahāprabhu confirmed this for Advaita Prabhu in a dream. Advaita Prabhu called all his children together and told them that the *gṛhastha-āśrama* (household life) is the best place to be if there is a *tulasī* plant in the courtyard, if every member of the family is wholeheartedly devoted to Kṛṣṇa, and if there is no blasphemy or violence towards the holy men. Advaita Prabhu preferred such a spiritual and honest household life over a life of hypocrisy and debauchery in the dress of a renunciate or *paramahaṁsa*. Moreover, the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* prohibits *sannyāsa* or any kind of renounced order in the age of Kali, since, now, hardly anyone is able to control his senses. Kṛṣṇa Miśra, being the only faithful householder son of Advaita, was given the responsibility of the service Śrī Rādhā-Madanagopāla, and Advaita Prabhu warned him not to give the service to non-devotees, atheists, impersonalists or *yogīs*.

Lord Nityānanda's son, Vīracandra, came to receive initiation from Advaita Prabhu, but Advaita sent him to his mother, Jāhnavā Devī, for initiation. All the descendants of Nityānanda

and Advaita have since then taken initiation from either of their parents.

Advaita Prabhu's Disappearance

For 25 years after Mahāprabhu's disappearance Advaita Prabhu remained manifest on earth, feeling great separation from his Nimāi and Nitāi, constantly remembering them and chanting their names. One day he called together his favourite sons Acyuta, Gopāla and Kṛṣṇa Miśra and sent for Vīracandra Prabhu and Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita from Ambikā Kalnā, as well as his leading disciples Yadunandanācārya, Śyāmadāsa and Kāmadeva. They performed *kīrtana* in ecstasy and Avaita suddenly entered the deity room of Śrī Rādhā-Madanagopāla, never again to return. This was the disappearance of Advaita Prabhu in 1559 A. D. in Śāntipura. Advaita Prabhu was manifest on earth for 125 years just like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and his *līlā* is divided into five phases. As in Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*, Advaita's *līlā* had the three phases; *kaumāra* (childhood), *paugaṇḍa* (boyhood) and *kaiśora* (youth). Advaita Prabhu also displayed the fourth and fifth stage of *yauvana* (adulthood) and *vārddhakya* (or transcendental old age). Just like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, though, Advaita Prabhu *never looked like an old man*, as he is often portrayed by different Vaiṣṇava artists in their paintings. Advaita Prabhu looked like a young man until the very end of his manifest *līlā*.

Conclusion

In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* there is a passage in which Mahāprabhu praises Advaita's opulence;

prabhu bole e sampatti manuṣyer naya,
ācārya maheśa hena mor citta laya......
bujhilām ācārya maheśa avatāra,
eimata hāsi' prabhu bale bārabāra......
mor priya śiva prati anādara yār,
kemate vā more bhakti haibe tāhār.[39]

39. C. bh., Antya, 4, pp. 550-551 (Kābāsī edition).

"The Lord said; 'This opulence (of Advaita's) is not human! I can see that (Advaita) Ācārya is the incarnation of Śiva.' The Lord smiling said again and again; 'How can anyone who disrespects my dearest Śiva ever become my devotee?'' Then Mahāprabhu quoted from the *Skanda Purāṇa*; *prathamaṁ keśavaṁ pūjya tato deva-maheśvaram.*[40] "One should first worship Lord Keśava (Viṣṇu) and then Maheśvara (Śiva)." Furthermore, the second offense to the chanting of the holy name is presented in the *Padma Purāṇa.* This offense is often misrepresented as "the consideration of the names of the demigods as equal to the names of Viṣṇu." The actual reading is; *śivasya śrī-viṣṇor ya iha guṇa nāmādi-sakalaṁ dhiyā bhinnaṁ paśyet sa khalu hari-nāmāhitakaraḥ.*[41] "That person who sees any difference between the qualities, names etc. of Lord Śiva and Śrī Viṣṇu certainly does injustice to the holy name of Hari."

From these texts we can see the Lord Śiva is not to be considered a mere demigod. Sadāśiva is stated in the *Purāṇas* to be a transcendental (*guṇātīta*) deity from the Vaikuṇṭha sphere. Thus Śiva should be shown all due respect and reverence, especially in light of the important role he played in Mahāprabhu's *līlā* as Advaita Ācārya, a glimpse of which I have tried to convey in this short essay.

40. Quoted in C. bh., Antya, 4, p. 551 (Kābāsī edition).
41. Quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa,* 11. 522.

RĀGĀNUGA-BHAJANA

GADĀDHAR PRĀṆ DĀS

The Target

What is the goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya (tradition)? What do the followers of Śrī Caitanya hope to attain by their rigorous lifetime's dedication to spiritual practice? If one were to ask these questions to ten different Vaiṣṇavas one would probably receive ten different answers. Actually this is not astonishing, however, because the study of any religion is a most complex subject. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is no exception to the rule. The answer to this most important question, "What is the goal," may differ according to many variables, such as, one's particular faith, acquired knowledge, present circumstances and the divine mercy received from both God and guru. I will give my opinion based on the above variables; what else is possible?

After nearly fifteen years of spiritual practice and study of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava texts, I have come to the conclusion that the goal of this *sampradāya* (tradition) is twofold. The spiritual practitioner (*sādhaka*) attains *siddhi* or spiritual perfection by receiving two spiritual bodies (*siddha-deha*). The first has a golden complexion and accompanies Śr Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in his eternal *līlā* in Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma, and the second is a *gopī-deha* (a cowherd girl's body) through which he serves Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the transcendental realm of Vṛndāvana. The highest ambrosial ecstasy experienced by the living being when he finally obtains the two eternal abodes of the Lord is the supreme perfection of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya.

This perfection is obtainable by the process of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, and the *siddha-praṇālī* is a most essential part of this *rāgānuga* system.

rāgānuga-mārge tāre bhaje yei jana,
sei jana pāya vraje vrajendranandana[1]

siddha-deha cinti' kare tāhāi sevana,
sakhī-bhāve pāya rādhā kṛṣṇera caraṇa.[2]

1. C. c., Ādi, 8. 221.
2. *Ibid.*, 8. 229.

"He who worships him by the path of *rāgānuga* obtains the son of the King of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa) in Vraja (Vṛndāvana). Thinking (of oneself) doing service there in the *siddha-deha*, one obtains the feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the mood of a female friend (*sakhī*)."

Rāgānuga-bhakti

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (B. r. s.) divides bhakti into three types: 1. *sādhana-bhakti*, devotion in practice; 2. *bhāva-bhakti*, devotion in spiritual ecstacy, and 3. *prema-bhakti*, devotion in love of God.[3] The first category, *sādhana-bhakti*, devotion in practice, is again divided into two. The first is *vaidhi-bhakti*, devotion in awe and reverence due to knowledge of the Lord's many opulences and in strict adherence to the instructions of the religious scriptures (*śāstras*).[4] The second is *rāgānuga-bhakti*, spontaneous devotion following in the footsteps of the *bhāvas* or emotions exhibited by the Lord's direct associates in Vṛndāvana.[5] It is important to note in this connection that *rāgānuga-bhakti* is a part of *bhakti* in practice and comes before the stage of *bhāva-bhakti*. By the practice of *rāga-bhakti* one is able to ascend to the level of *bhāva-bhakti*. Some Vaiṣṇavas mistakenly think, however, that *rāgānuga-bhakti* is a highly advanced practice only to be executed after one attains to the exalted stage of *bhāva* (emotion). This is not true according to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin.

Śrī Rūpa goes on to say in the B. r. s. that the *adhikāra* or "right" to perform *rāgānuga* devotion belongs to those *bhaktas* (devotees) who, after hearing of the emotions of the devotion of the residents of Vṛndāvana, desire to attain similar positions themselves.[6] In other words, the right to perform *rāgānuga-bhakti* simply depends on the desire to have it and nothing else. This statement is also supported by Śrīla Viśvanātha

3. B. r. s., 1. 2. 1.
4. *Ibid.*, 1. 2. 5.
5. *Ibid.*, 1. 2. 210.
6. *Ibid.*, 1. 2. 291.

Cakravartin (17th century) in his commentary on the text.[7] Śrī Viśvanātha, however, also says in another place that *rāgānuga-bhakti* should begin from the stage of *niṣṭhā* or firm faith.[8] When one's faith is firmly established in the *iṣṭadevatā* (the lord of one's life) and the *bhakta* desires strongly within his heart to attain that particular from of the Lord, this is called *niṣṭhā*. For example, a *bhakta* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa who has firm faith in his deities does not desire to attain any other forms of the Lord. Kṛṣṇa has his various forms and *līlās* outside of Vṛndāvana, in such places as Dvārakā and Mathurā. But such a *naiṣṭhika bhakta* does not wish to attain Kṛṣṇa in such places, what to speak of wishing to attain the service of other *avatāra* forms such as Rāma, Nṛsiṁha, or Nārāyaṇa. Such a *bhakta* only wants to hear about the names, forms, qualities and *līlās* of his chosen deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This stage is called *niṣṭhā*. Such a *bhakta* is an ideal candidate for *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

Establishing the chosen deity is not complete, however, until the *bhakta* establishes his particular relationship with that deity. This is called the *sthāyibhāva* or permanent emotion. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa may be my desired deities, but who am I? Or, more appropriately, who do I want to be? Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings; *sādhane bhābibe yāhā*, *siddha-dehe pābe tāhā*. "All the desires that the devotee cherishes at the time of *sādhana* or spiritual practice will be fulfilled upon receiving a *siddha-deha* or spiritual body." This spiritual body, of course, must be confirmed by the guru.

If one's *iṣṭa-devatā* is Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, what will one's relationship to them be? Let us have a look at what the relationships were of our previous *ācāryas* (teachers) and gurus of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. After all, we are following in their footsteps. First, let us turn to Rūpa Gosvāmin, because this *sampradāya* was established by him in the beginning. He is

7. *Bhakti-sāra-pradarśinī*, 1. 2. 291-2.
8. *Ibid.*, 1. 3. 7.

the *ādi-guru* or original guru. His relationship is that of a *dāsī* or female attendant of Śrī Rādhā.[9] These *gopī* (cowherd girl) attendants of Rādhārāṇī are more commonly known as *mañjarīs*. How do they differ from other *gopīs*? Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin in his *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* says that that there are basically five types of *gopīs* within Rādhārāṇī's entourage. These are as follows: 1. *paramapreṣṭha-sakhīs* (most dear friends), 2. *priya-sakhīs* (dear friends), 3. *sakhīs* (friends), 4. *nitya-sakhīs* (constant friends), and 5. *prāṇa-sakhīs* (life-friends).[10]

The *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* are the eight chief friends of Śrī Rādhā. They are expansions of the eight moods of the supreme *nāyikā* (heroine), Śrī Rādhā, and are superior in position to all of the other *gopīs* in Rādhārāṇī's group. Their names are: Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā, Campakalitā, Raṅgadevī, Sudevī, Indulekhā, and Tuṅgavidyā. These eight *sakhīs*, though friends of Śrī Rādhā, also at times have their own erotic sports with the supreme *nāyaka* (hero), Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the forest bowers of Vṛndāvana. Those encounters Rādhārāṇī herself sometimes arranges.

Next are the *priya-sakhīs* who are subordinate to the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*. They are sixty-four in number and are organized in groups of eight, each group being under one of the *paramapreṣṭha-sakhīs*. They also are known to have erotic encounters with Kṛṣṇa, even though they are established in service to Rādhā. After them are the *sakhīs*. They are Kusumikā, Vindhyā, Dhaniṣṭhā, etc. Next are the *prāṇa-sakhīs*, Śaśimukhī, Vāsantī, Lāsikā, etc.; and the *nitya-sakhīs*, Kastūrī Mañjarī, Maṇi Mañjarī, etc. These last *sakhīs* are more commonly known as *mañjarīs*. The special feature of *mañjarīs* is that they never will mix with Kṛṣṇa alone in erotic exchanges. They are determined in the endeavour to bring Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa together. Even if Rādhārāṇī coaxes one of her *mañjarīs* to go to Kṛṣṇa, she will not. This is her firm determination.

9. See the discussion of origin of the *mañjarī-bhāva* in Nirod Prasād Nāth, *Narottama Dāsa O Tāhār Granthāvalī*, Introduction. (Ed.)
10. U. n., 4. 50-54.

It is important to know that of the five types of *sakhīs* in Rādhārāṇi's *yūtha*, or group, some have equal affection for both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, some have more affection for Kṛṣṇa, and some have more affection for Rādhārāṇī. For example, the eight *paramapreṣṭha-sakhīs* headed by Lalitā and Viśākhā have equal affection for both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The *priya-sakhīs* and *sakhīs* have more affection for Kṛṣṇa than for Rādhā. The *nitya-sakhīs* and the *prāṇa-sakhīs*, who are the *mañjarīs*, have more affection for Rādhā than they do for Kṛṣṇa.[11] In fact, the special type of *rati* (love) or *sthāyibhāva* which they have is technically called *bhāvollāsa-rati* in Rūpa's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.[12]

The type of mood possessed by the *mañjarīs* is very unique. It is part of *madhura-rasa* (the spiritual erotic sentiment), but it is a special category found nowhere else. Generally in erotic relationships, the erotic exchanges take place between the *nāyaka* (the male lover) and the *nāyikā* (the female lover), but here, in the case of the *mañjarīs*, there is no direct physical relationship with Kṛṣṇa. How then can this be called *madhura-rasa*? The answer to this question can be found in Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's *Govinda-līlāmṛta*. There he says that Kṛṣṇa is like a black Tamāla tree and Rādhārāṇī a golden vine entwined firmly around that tree. The *mañjarīs* are compared to the flowers produced from that golden vine.[13] The meaning of the simile is that the *mañjarīs* are like the extensions of Rādhārāṇī's body. If Rādhārāṇī is embracing Kṛṣṇa, the *mañjarīs* feel it too by seeing it first hand. Even more astonishing is the fact that the love marks which appear on the body of Rādhā sometimes also appear on the bodies of the *mañjarīs* even though they play no direct part in the love-making.[14]

This happens because the *mañjarīs* are so tuned to Rādhārāṇī through their *sevā* (service) that their minds and feelings

11. *Ibid.*, 8. 126-137.
12. B. r. s., 2. 5. 128.
13. G. l., 10. 18. Also see G. l., 10. 16.
14. *Ibid*, 11. 137.

have become identical with hers. Similarly the different changes that take place in her body during love-making also become visible in the bodies of the *mañjarīs*.

As was said previously, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin's relationship is that of a *mañjarī gopī*. His name is Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. The other Gosvāmins as well belong to this *mañjarī* order. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmin is Śrī Lavaṅga Mañjarī, Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa is Śrī Rati Mañjarī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmin is Śrī Rasa Mañjarī, Śrī Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmin is Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī, and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin is Śrī Vilāsa Mañjarī. Aside from the six Gosvāmins, this practice has been followed up to the present by the different lines of the *ācāryas*. Some other examples are Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja who is Śrī Kastūrī Mañjarī; Śrī Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura who is Śrī Campaka Mañjarī; Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartin who is Śrī Vinodavallarī Mañjarī and Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura who is Śrī Kamalā Mañjarī.

Actually this *mañjarī-bhāva* (mood) or *sādhana* (practice) following Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī is the most prominent form of worship found in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. There may be other *rasas* such as *vātsalya* (parental), *sakhya* (friendly) and *dāsya* (servile), but the followers of Śrī Caitanya are mostly *madhura-rasa-āśrita* or followers of the holy erotic affection. This was Mahāprabhu's main inclination in his tasting of *rasa*, and indeed, his descent as an *avatāra* (incarnation) in this Age of Kali was primarily to experience this *rasa*;

> ye lāgi' avatāra kahi se mūla kāraṇa.
> prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādana,
> rāga-mārga bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa.[15]

> ei saba rasa-niryāsa kariba āsvāda,
> ei dvāre kariba bhaktere prasāda.
> vrajera nirmala rāga śuni' bhaktagaṇa,
> rāga-mārge bhaje yena chāṛi' dharma-karma.[16]

15. C. c., Ādi, 4. 14-15.
16. *Ibid.*, 4. 32-33.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says; "Now let me say what is the main reason for Śrī Gaurāṅga's incarnation. It is to taste the essence of *prema-rasa* (*madhura* or erotic *bhakti*) and to teach the method of *rāgānuga-bhakti* to the people...." "I shall taste this *madhura-rasa* myself and, by this, give my grace to all my devotees. After hearing about the pure passions found in Vṛndāvana, all of my devotees will take to the path of *rāga-bhakti* giving up all other paths of activity and religion."

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja further states in the Eighth Chapter of the *Madhya-līlā*;

> sei gopī-bhāvāmṛte yār lobha haya,
> veda-dharma tyaji' sei kṛṣṇare bhajaya.
> rāgānuga-mārge tāre bhaje yei jana,
> sei jana pāya vraje vrajendra-nandana.
> vrajalokera konobhāva lāñā yei bhaje,
> bhāva-yogya deha pāñā kṛṣṇa pāya vraje.[17]
>
> vidhi-mārge na pāya vraje kṛṣṇa candra.
> ataeva gopī-bhāva kari' aṅgīkāra,
> rātri-dina cintā kare rādhā-kṛṣṇer vihāra.
> siddha-deha cinti' kare tāhāñi sevana,
> sakhī-bhāve pāya rādhā-kṛṣṇer caraṇa.
> gopī anugata vinā aiśvarya-jñāne,
> bhajile nāhi pāya vrajendranandana.[18]

"Those *bhaktas* who have a desire to taste the nectar of the feelings of *gopīs* should give up all other injunctions of the Vedic scriptures and the opinions of the common people and simply worship Kṛṣṇa. He who worships by the process of *rāgānuga-bhakti* will get Vrajendranandana, Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. By following the feelings of the devotees in Vṛndāvana, one will get a body suitable for those feelings and obtain Kṛṣṇa there." "By the method of following rules one does not get Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. Therefore, take up the feelings of a *gopī* and constantly, day and night, think of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's

17. *Ibid.*, Madhya, 8. 220-222.
18. *Ibid.*, 8. 228-230.

līlā. Think of your *siddha-deha* (spiritual body) and do mental service. Through the feelings of the *sakhīs* (girlfriends), one may attain the lotus feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. If one does not follow the *gopīs* but worships him as Lord (in awe and reverence), one will not get Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana."

Now the question may be raised; "How should a *bhakta* desiring to follow the *gopīs* as a *mañjarī* go about this practice? The process is called *siddha-praṇālī*. This is obtained from a guru who comes in an authentic line of gurus with an unbroken succession back to the time of Śrī Caitanya. The *siddha-praṇālī* must be given to the disciple by the guru and can be received in no other way. It can not be artificially imagined outside of the disciplic succession or it will bear no fruit. The main consideration is that the practitioner is following his own guru's *siddha-svarūpa* (eternal or perfected form). This is his *guru-rūpa-sakhī* (guru as female friend). Her mercy is essential. She is in the *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and is in turn following her *guru-rūpa-sakhī*, and so on all the way up the line of disciplic succession. There is an internal succession which consists of the *mañjarī* forms of all the members of the succession. This is to be meditated on mentally. In order to more clearly illustrate this, let me give the example of my own guru succession. This is the original *dīkṣā* (initiation) line of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. It was most mercifully given to me at the time of my *dīkṣā* by his son and direct disciple, Śrīla Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura, two months before he left this mortal world at the age of 101. If I had not received it, perhaps this ancient system would have been lost to the Western World.

The Disciplic Succession

1. Nityānanda's *śakti* (energy, i. e. wife), Śrī Jāhnavā Mātā-Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī (Rādhā's younger sister)
2. Śrī Rāmacandra Gosvāmin – Śrī Ratna Mañjarī
3. Śrī Rasavallabha Gosvāmin – Śrī Rasa Mañjarī
4. Śrī Keśavacandra Gosvāmin – Śrī Kanaka Mañjarī
5. Śrī Rudreśvara Gosvāmin – Śrī Rati Mañjarī



Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa
The eight Sakhīs and eight Mañjarīs

ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ-KṚṢṆA AND THE EIGHT SAKHĪS

NAME	ŚRĪ RAṄGA-DEVĪ	ŚRĪ CAMPAKA-LATĀ	ŚRĪ CITRĀ	ŚRĪ LALITĀ	ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA	ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ	ŚRĪ VIŚĀKHĀ	ŚRĪ INDU-REKHĀ	ŚRĪ TUṄGA-VIDYĀ	ŚRĪ SUDEVĪ
AGE	14-2 4·5	12-2-13·5	14-7-15	14-8-27	15-7-7·5	14-2-15·5	14-2-15·5	14-2-10·5	14-2-22	14-2-4 5
DRESS	Jaba flower (Red)	Chasa bird (Blue)	Crystal	Peacock	Yellow	Blue	Star Cluster	Dāṛimba (Red)	Pāṇḍu (Pale Yellow)	Jaba flower (Red)
BODY COLOR	Yellow	Campaka	Reddish Yellow	Deep Yellow	Sapphire Blue	Molten Gold	Lightning Color	Golden	Sandal	Bright Yellow
SERVICE	Sandal	Jewel Mālā	Lavaṅga, Mālā	Tāmbūla	–	–	Jewel Decoration	Amṛta Bhojana	Dancing	Water
PERSON-ALITY	Vāma-Madhyā	Vāma-Madhyā	Adhika-Mṛdvī	Vāma-Prakharā	Dhīra-Lalita	Vāma-Madhyā	Vāma-Madhyā	Vāma-Prakharā	Dakṣiṇa-Prakharā	Vāma-Prakharā
GAURA-LĪLĀ	Govinda Ghoṣa	Śivānanda Sena	Govindā-nanda Ṭhākura	Svarūpa Dāmodara	Śrī Caitanya	Śrī Gadādhara	Rāmānanda Rāya	Rāmānanda Vasu	Vakreśvara Paṇḍita	Śrī Vāsudeva Ghoṣa

THE EIGHT MAÑJARĪS

NAME	ŚRĪ MAÑJULĀLĪ MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ GUṆA MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ LAVAṄGA MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ RŪPA MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ RATI MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ RASA MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ VILĀSA MAÑJARĪ	ŚRĪ KASTURĪ MAÑJARĪ
AGE	13-6-7	13-1-27	13-6-1	13-6	13-2	13	12-11-26	13-1
DRESS	Jaba flower (Red)	Jaba flower (Red)	Star Cluster	Peacock	Star Cluster	Swan White	Bumble Bee (Blue-Black)	Crystal
BODY COLOR	Molten Gold	Lightning	Lightning	Gorocana (Deep Yellow)	Lightning	Campa flower	Golden Ketakī	Molten Gold
SERVICE	Vastra (Clothes)	Water	Lavaṅga, Mālā	Tāmbūla or Foot Massage	Foot Massage	Dūtī (Messenger)	Pāda-Sevā	Sandal
GAURA-LĪLĀ	Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmin	Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmin	Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmin	Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin	Śrī Raghu-nātha Dāsa Gosvāmin	Śrī Raghu-nātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmin	Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin	Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Gosvāmin

6. Śrī Dayārāma Gosvāmin – Śrī Dāna Mañjarī
7. Śrī Maheśvarī Gosvāminī – Śrī Madhu Mañjarī
8. Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī Gosvāminī – Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī
9. Śrī Rāmamaṇi Gosvāminī – Śrī Rasa Mañjarī
10. Śrī Yajñeśvara Gosvāmin – Śrī Yuti Mañjarī
11. Śrī Vipina Vihārī Gosvāmin – Śrī Vilāsa Mañjarī
12. Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – Śrī Kamala Mañjarī
13. Śrī Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura – Śrī Latā Mañjarī

Next I will explain the system of *siddha-praṇāli* from the books of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Siddha-praṇālī

Here are some excerpts from Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's book, *Śrī Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi*;

sādhite ujjvala rasa, āche bhāva ekādaśa,
sambandha, vayas, nāma, rūpa,
yūtha, veśa, ājñāvāsa, sevā, parākāṣṭhāśvāsa,
pālyadāsī eka aparūpa.[19]

"To practice the erotic *rasa*, there are eleven items to know about one's own *siddha-deha* (spiritual body). They are as follows: relationship, age, name, body color, group, dress, order, residence, service, highest desire or expectation, and being a protected servant." Relationship means friend/servant (*mañjarī*), age is usually twelve or thirteen years, name is 'so-and-so' Mañjarī, and body color is of a number of different types. Group means one of the eight chief *gopīs*' groups to which one belongs. Dress means the color of one's dress. Order means the order of a particular *sakhī* or friend which one follows. With regard to order, Bhaktivinoda says;

yūtheśvarī śrī-lalitā, sarva-guṇe sulalitā,
śrī-rādhār nitya-sahacārī,
āmi nitya tār guṇe, tad-ājñā pratipālane,
āmi thāki tāhār kiṅkarī.[20]

19. H. n. c., p. 154.
20. This verse and the two following ones were given to the author by

"My group leader is Śrī Lalitā, who is adorned with all good qualities. She is a close friend of Śrī Rādhā. I am her servant, always following her orders closely." Residence is the name of the forest bower in which the *sādhaka* (practicing) *mañjarī* lives. At Rādhā Kuṇḍa (the lake of Śrī Rādhā), there are thousands of such bowers in which the different girl friends of Rādhā live. Service is the type of service that the practitioner does for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. All the *mañjarīs* are expert in many types of services, but each is noted for a special kind of service. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda says on the topic of the highest expectation;

sevā-bale yei rūpa, rādhā-kṛṣṇa sakhīrūpa,
pela rūpa mañjarī prabhṛti,
haye sakhī anugāmī, adyai labiba āmi,
rādhā-kṛṣṇa nitya sevā rīti.
ei mata bhāva laye, parākāṣṭhā bali tāhe,
bhāva jāni yugala sevane,
sei parākāṣṭhā-bale, sakhīra anugā hale,
yugala bhajiba vraja-vane.

"By the strength of service, Rūpa Mañjarī and others became the *sakhīs* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In that way too by becoming a follower of the *sakhīs*, I will now gain the eternal service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Having this kind of attitude is what I call the highest expectation, a feeling for the service of the divine couple. If, on the strength of that expectation, I become a follower of a *sakhī* I will worship (obtain) the divine couple in Vṛndāvana."

Being a protected servant is to be a female attendant subordinate to another, more experienced *sakhī*. In this case, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda says;

pālyadāsī lalitār, āpanāke jāni sāra,
basi tāñr śrī-kuñja-mandire.

his guru, Lalitā Prasāda Thākura, at the time of initiation into *siddha-praṇālī*. They were written by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, but exactly where, in his vast literary output, they are found is uncertain. (Ed.)

tāñhār ādeśa mata, sevā kārye rahiyāta,
paricaryā pāiba satvare.

"I know myself to be Śrī Lalitā's protected servant. I remain in her *kuñja-mandira* (forest bower) and serve according to her every order. In this way, I will quickly gain the sacred attendance."

These eleven items are the ingredients for contemplating on one's own *mañjarī siddha-deha* (spiritual body). Along with this contemplation, one should meditate on the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The term *aṣṭakālīya* refers to the eight periods of a day during which different *līlās* (playful activities) take place. This subject will be taken up a little later.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that in this process there are five stages which follow upon one another. They are known as the *śravana-daśā*, the *varaṇa-daśā*, the *smaraṇa-daśā*, the *āpana-daśā* and *sampatti-daśā*. The first stage, *śravana-daśā*, is the stage of hearing about the *līlā*;

nijāpekṣa śreṣṭha śuddha-bhāvuka ye jana,
bhāva-mārge gurudeva sei mahājana.
tāñhār śrī-mukhe bhāva-tattver śravana
haile śravana-daśā haya prakaṭana.[21]

"A great one who is independent, pure and best among those who experience *bhāva* (feeling) is the guru on the path of *bhāva*. If one hears from him about the principles of *bhāva* then the stage of hearing has been reached."

Next comes the *varaṇa daśā* which means acceptance of the teachings heard in the previous stage;

rādhā-kṛṣṇa aṣṭakāla yei līlā kare,
tāhār śravane lobha haya antaḥpare.
lobha haite gurupade jijñāsā udaya,
kemane pāiba līlā kaha mahāśaya.
gurudeva kṛpā kari' karibe varṇana,
līlā-tattve ekādaśa bhāva-saṅghaṭana.
prasanna haiyā prabhu karibe ādeśa,
ei bhāve līlā madhye karaha praveśa.

21. H. n. c., p. 156.

siddharūpe siddhabhāva kariyā śravaṇa,
sei bhāva svīya citte karibe varaṇa.[22]

"On hearing about the eight-period *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, one may develop an intense desire to know more. As a result of that desire one inquires from his guru; 'Tell me how can I reach this *līlā*?' Then the guru, having compassion for the disciple, will describe the group of eleven conditions in the *līlā*. Being pleased, the master will give the order; 'In this way you should enter into the *līlā*.' Having heard about the perfected conditions of his spiritual body, the disciple should accept those conditions in his own heart."

At the time of the acceptance of *siddha-praṇālī*, the disciple may also inform his guru of his own personal *ruci* or tastes with respect to service, dress, age and the other eleven spiritual conditions. The *siddha-praṇālī* will thus be such that the student will be completely satisfied with what he has received;

varaṇa-kālete nija-ruci vicāriyā,
gurupade jānāibe sarala haiyā.
prabhu tumi kṛpā kari' yei paricaya
dile more, tāhe more pūrṇa prīti haya.
svabhāvataḥ mora ei bhāve ruci,
ataeva ājñā śire dhari haye śuci.[23]

"At the time of acceptance one should reflect on one's own tastes and humbly make them known to the guru; 'Master, I am fully pleased with the position you have given me out of your kindness. By nature I am attracted to this (other) position. Therefore I await and shall follow your decision.'"

The stage of *smaraṇa* is the stage of meditation;

nija-siddha ekādaśa-bhāve vrati haye,
smaribe sudṛḍha-citte nija-bhāva-caye.[24]

"One should then become intent upon one's eleven spiritual

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-7.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

conditions and should meditate with a firm mind on one's own position (in the *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa)."

The *āpana-daśā* is the stage of adjusting everything in the meditation to one's own personal taste or *ruci.*

smaraṇe vicāra eka ache to' sundara,
āpaner yogya-smṛti kara nirantara.
āpaner ayogya-smaraṇa yadi haya,
bahuyuga sādhileo siddhi kabhu naya.[25]

"In meditation there is one important consideration. One should always meditate according to one's own personal taste. If one meditates in a way unsuitable to oneself then he may practice for many ages and never obtain the desired result or *siddhi.*"

Contant practice of this *sādhana* will lead to *siddhi* which is the last stage called *sampatti-daśā.* When the practitioner finally attains his actual *siddha-deha* or spiritual body and enters into the realm of the eternal *līlā* to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa along with the other *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*, he has achieved his final goal.

Aṣṭakālīya-līlā

Aṣṭa-kāla refers to the eight periods in the day when various types of *līlā* occur. In other words, the day and night of twenty-four hours is divided into eight parts. These are: *niśānta*, the end of the night, from 3:30 A.M. to 6:00 A.M.; *prātaḥ*, morning, from 6:00 A M. to 8:30 A.M.; *pūrvāhnaḥ*, mid-morning, from 8:30 to 10:30 A.M.; *madhyāhnaḥ*, midday, from 10:45 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. (this is a longer period due to extensive *līlā*); *aparāhnaḥ*, late afternoon, from 3:30 to 6:00 P.M.; *sāyāhnaḥ*, early evening, from 6:00 to 8:30 P.M.; *pradoṣa*, late evening, from 8:30 to 10:45 P.M.; and finally *niśā*, night, from 10:45 P.M. to 3.30 A.M. (this night period is also extended due to the numerous *līlās* that take place in the night).

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin was the initiator of this system of

25. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

smaraṇa or meditation on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*. He gave Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja the incentive to write the *Govinda-līlāmṛta*. This is the main text for the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya practice of meditation on the *līlā* of the eight periods.[26]

Śrīla Kavi Karṇapūra and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartin, however, also wrote the *Kṛṣṇāhnika-kaumudī* and the *Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta*, respectively, on this *līlā*. These texts or poems-for-meditation form the main foundations of *rāgānuga* practice. The *mahājanas* or Vaiṣṇava, vernacular poets such as Rāya Śekhara, Govinda Dāsa, Uddhava Dāsa, Śrī Yadunandana and many others have also written *aṣṭakālīya padāvalis*, Bengali songs relating to the eightfold *līlā*. Śrī Caitanya too has an eight-period *līlā* which Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartin has described and on which Narahari Cakravartin has written in his *Bhakti-ratnākara*. Songs from *padyāvalis* of Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, Narahari Sarkāra and many others portray this *līlā* of Mahāprabhu.

Another outstanding work has been written by a famous *siddha-mahātmā* known as Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā who lived in Govardhana in Vraja in the 18th century. In his book, the *Sādhanāmṛta-candrikā*, he gives an extensive treatment of the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of both Śrī Caitanya and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. I will now give a brief overview of this *līlā*.

In the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, it is the custom to first remember Śrī Gaurāṅga by means of the *gaura-candrikā* before meditating on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. This system also applies to the singing of *padyāvali-kīrtana* as well. Thus I shall combine the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of Śrī Caitanya as described by Viśvanātha Cakravartin in his *Smaraṇa-maṅgala-stotra* with the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as described in Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja's *Daśa-ślokī*, which is the kernel of his *Govinda-līlāmṛta*. It should be noted, however, that this is a mere glimpse; this *līlā* is so infinitely vast that it would not be possible to describe it fully even in thousands of books.

26. See the other essay in this volume, "Time Enough for Play," for a more detailed discussion of the early texts dealing with this practice. (Ed.)

In the *maṅgalācaraṇa* (opening verse) of his work, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartin (following Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja) says that this *līlā* is so confidential that important gods such as Śiva, Brahmā and Ananta Śeṣa do not know about it, what to speak of the ordinary persons of this world. It is known and can be approached, however, by those *bhaktas* who follow the Gaura-pariṣadas (the associates of Śrī Caitanya) and the Vraja-vāsīs (the residents of Vṛndāvana, i. e. the associates of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) by the process of mental service with intense desire. This is the path of *rāga* or passion.

In the end-of-night *līlā*, we find Śrī Gauracandra in a jeweled cottage sleeping. The house is in Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's flower garden. After the previous night's *saṅkīrtana* (religious singing and dancing), all of the *bhaktas* have fallen asleep in this flower garden in their respective places. Śrī Gaurasundara is in deep absorption in the *līlā* that is simultaneously taking place between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. So too are all of his *bhaktas*. After *maṅgala-āratrika* (the day's first, and therefore most auspicious, ritual greeting), Gaurāṅga returns home before the light of day begins.

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are also sleeping, wrapped in a sweet embrace, in a jeweled cottage surrounded by a flower bower on the bank of the Yamunā. Śrī Vṛndā Devī knowing that the time has come to send them both to their homes, awakens them by signaling various birds, such as the *kokila* and parrots, to sing. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* enter the cottage to perform various duties necessary for that time including the *maṅgala āratrika*. Then Kakkhaṭi, an old female monkey, comes into the bower screeching that Jaṭilā (Rādhārāṇī's mother-in-law) is coming their way. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa hurry to their respective homes before the sun rises.

In the morning *līlā*, Śrī Gauracandra is awakened at his own home by his mother, Śacī Devī. All of his devotees simultaneously enter his bedroom. After *rasodgāra*, or a brief recollection of the previous night's activities, the Lord and his devotees go to the Gaṅgā for their morning baths. After playing

in the water for some time, they return home where Gaurāṅga is dressed in clean garments and adorned with flower garlands, jewel ornaments and sandalwood paste. Śr Gadādhara then reads the *Bhāgavata* following which the Lord takes the *prasāda*, the sacred remnants, of the household deity, along with all of his devotees.

In Vṛndāvana, Rādhārāṇī takes her bath and is nicely decorated by her *sakhīs* (friends) and *mañjarīs*. She then goes to the house of Nanda (Kṛṣṇa's father) where she begins to cook for Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, after waking up, goes with the cowherd boys to milk the cows at the cowshed. When he comes back he is bathed and dressed by his mother and the other household servants. Then, in the company of his cowherd friends, Kṛṣṇa sits down to eat the delicious meal Rādhārāṇī has prepared. Rādhā watches from a distance with her friends. Kṛṣṇa then takes a brief nap and Rādhā with her friends partakes of Kṛṣṇa's remnants and then returns home.

During the mid-morning *līlā*, Śrī Gaurasundara takes his devotees out into the countryside singing the Lord's holy names and dancing. On the way he visits the homes of some of his dear devotees. In his mind he is absorbed in the moods of Vṛndāvana and thinks of Kṛṣṇa's entering the forest with the cow-herd boys to graze the cows.

In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa wakes from his nap and, along with his friends, enters the surrounding forest with the cows and calves. All of the residents of the settlement watch this colorful procession from their homes. At the pasture grounds, after playing for some time with the other cowherd boys, Kṛṣṇa leaves their company and, with one or two of his most confidential friends like Madhumaṅgala or Subala, begins to search for Rādhārāṇī. Rādhārāṇī leaves her house in the company of her friends to perform worship of the sun god whose temple is deep in the forest.

During the midday *līlā*, Śrī Gaurāṅga, after performing *kīrtana* (singing and dancing) with his devotees, arrives at the bank of the Gaṅgā. There they begin to enact the various

līlās of Vṛndāvana. Śrī Mahāprabhu takes the Gaṅgā to be the Yamunā, the various flower gardens there to be the bowers of Vṛndāvana, and all of his associates to be their original Vṛndāvana personalities. Thus he enacts the various *līlās* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; such as water games, swinging, drinking intoxicating honey, etc.

In Vṛndāvana, after a great effort, Vṛndā and the *sakhīs* finally succeed in bringing Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa together at Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa (the pond of Rādhā). This meeting is so exhilarating to both that various physical transformations appear in their bodies and in the bodies of the other *gopīs* (horripilation, tears, quivering, etc.). Then, one after another, various *līlās* take place; swinging, water games, the stealing of Kṛṣṇa's flute, drinking honey, *pāśakeli* (a type of game), erotic flirtation, love-making and finally the worship of the sun god.

In the late afternoon *līlā*, Śrī Mahāprabhu, after relishing the *līlā* of Vṛndāvana with his associates on the bank of the Gaṅgā, starts towards home singing and dancing as he goes. On their way, he and his devotees visit the temples of all his prominent associates: Acyutānanda, Advaitācārya, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Śrī Candraśekharācārya. In every temple he watches the *āratrika* ceremony of the deity and finally arrives at his own home. Śrī Gaurāṅga is greeted by his mother Śacī and fother Jagannātha Miśra.

In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa returns to the cowherd boys and begins his journey home from the pasture grounds. Rādhārāṇī, in the company of her *sakhīs*, has already returned home and, after bathing and dressing herself beautifully, loiters near the path on which Kṛṣṇa will return. On his return, their eyes meet and both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa experience a great joy. Kṛṣṇa is greeted by his mother and father and the other prominent members of the cowherd community. Śrī Rādhā returns to her home and prepares various sweets to send to Kṛṣṇa's house.

In the early evening *līlā*, Śrī Mahāprabhu goes to the Gaṅgā to do Gaṅgā *pūjā* (worship) and, after bathing, returns home to be nicely dressed in fresh clothes and ornamented with

garlands and jewelery. He then enjoys his evening meal, *prasāda*, in the company of his family and devotees.

In Vṛndāvana, Rādhā sends sweets to Kṛṣṇa's house with a messenger *gopī* who also secretly finds out where Kṛṣṇa will meet Rādhā for their night *līlā*. That *sakhī* returns quickly to Rādhārāṇī's house with the information and some of Kṛṣṇa's remnants for her. Kṛṣṇa, in the meantime, has taken his bath and is attractively dressed and decorated. He then sits down to have his meal.

In the late evening *līlā*, Śrī Gaurasundara goes to the houses of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and, after enjoying *hari-kathā* or discussions centered around Kṛṣṇa for some time, begins the *saṅkīrtana* (singing and dancing) which lasts long into the night. Śrī Gaurāṅga again enters into the moods of the Vṛndāvana *līlā*.

In Vṛndāvana, Rādhārāṇī begins her *abhisāra* (journey to meet her secret lover, i. e. Kṛṣṇa) taking with her one or two confidential friends. She enters into the forest in search of Kṛṣṇa. On dark nights she wears a blue dress, and on moonlit nights she wears a white dress. Śrī Kṛṣṇa first attends the Rāja Sabhā (an evening gathering of the men of the community for amusement) with his father to watch various plays, hear songs and enjoy comedians. Later, after returning home to go to bed, he sneaks off into the night to meet with Rādhārāṇī and her friends.

During the night *līlā*, Śrī Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* continues, and after a long period of singing and dancing, he takes his devotees with him to the Gaṅgā to relieve their fatigue. They play in the water for some time and then Mahāprabhu comes out of the water, has a late-night snack and lays down to rest in a jeweled cottage in Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's flower garden. On some nights, however, he returns home to enjoy the company of his eternal consort, Śrī Viṣṇu Priyā.

In Vṛndāvana, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet on the bank of the Yamunā. After exchanging *prahelikās* or riddles with deep hidden meanings, Kṛṣṇa, with Rādhā by his side, begins to wander through the different forest bowers of Vṛndāvana ad-

miring the extraordinary beauty of the forests at night. Sometimes they also recite poems to please each other. After a while, they arrive at the place where the *rāsa-līlā* will take place. For the rest of the night they enjoy the *rāsa* or circle dance. Often they also drink intoxicating honey and enjoy the sport of swinging, etc. These *līlās* are punctuated by passionate love-making in the hidden bowers of the forest. Finally, there are water sports in the Yamunā and feasting on sweets and fruit before Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa retire to their jeweled cottage to rest.

This is only a brief glimpse of the eternal *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and of Mahāprabhu and his associates: a drop from the ocean of infinite *līlā*. Beside the regular, daily *līlās*, there are also *naimittika* or occasional *līlās*, *līlās* that happen on special occasions such as Janmāṣṭamī (Kṛṣṇa's birthday), Rādhāṣṭamī (Rādhā's birthday), the *dāna-līlā* (the toll collecting *līlā*), the *muktā-caritra* (the story of the pearl), etc.

Conclusion

Now I have presented all of the ingredients necessary for performing *rāgānuga* practice. To put everything together, however, one very important item is required. Without this element one may perform this practice for many lifetimes without attaining any success. On the other hand, if this is present, then in a very short time one may gain one's goal. This ingredient is called *laulya* or "greed." One must be very anxious to reach the desired objective. In fact, one must be completely obsessed with securing Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day. Then only will the *bhāvas* or emotions arise and grow into *prema* which brings about a complete melting of the heart. Only then will the eternal *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa spread itself before one's inner perception.

The whole process begins with meditation on the *siddha-deha* or spiritual body which the guru gives the disciple to allow him to serve in the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā*. This mental service is done while doing *japa* (soft chanting) of the holy names

(Hare Kṛṣṇa...) on one's beads. It can also be practiced while serving the deities or images of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. One should then mentally think of oneself as a *mañjarī* of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and visualize oneself serving Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. It is necessary, however, to know about the *līlā* and about *rasa* very thoroughly, or else one may concoct situations that cause a mixing of incompatible feelings. To avoid such problems one should read carefully the *rasa* texts of the Gosvāmins. For the benefit of the sincere reader, a list of some of the most important texts for this practice follows:

1. *Govinda-līlāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja.
2. *Kṛṣṇāhnika-kaumudī*, Kavi Karṇapūra.
3. *Kṛṣṇa bhāvanāmṛta*, Viśvanātha Cakravartin.
4. *Bhāvanā-sāra-saṅgraha*, Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā.
5. *Sādhanāmṛta-candrikā*, " " .
6. *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Rūpa Gosvāmin.
7. *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, " " .
8. *Saṅkalpa-kalpadruma*, Viśvanātha Cakravartin.
9. *Nandīśvara-candrikā*, " " .
10. *Vidagdha-mādhava*, Rūpa Gosvāmin.
11. *Lalita-mādhava*, " " .
12. *Dāna-keli-kaumudī*, " " .
13. *Gopāla-campū*, Jīva Gosvāmin.
14. *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū*, Kavi Karṇapūra.
15. *Mādhava-mahotsava*, Jīva Gosvāmin.
16. *Rādhā-rasa-sudhānidhi*, Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī.
17. *Gīta-govinda*, Jayadeva.
18. *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, Bilvamaṅgala.

Postscript

Lastly, I would like to say a few words about my personal life. Previously I served Kṛṣṇa in Iskcon for ten years under the name of Pāndu Dāsa. After leaving the organization in 1980 many of my god-brothers and god-sisters, not understanding my action, became disturbed and, in some cases, even abusive. I felt sorry for this. Some went so far as to say

that I had kicked my previous guru, Bhaktivedānta Swāmi, in the face. These mistaken ideas must be corrected.

I would like to make it clear that I consider Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda my eternal guru. By his divine grace I was able to take up the path of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in the beginning, and later, by his grace also, I received many divine gifts such as faith in the holy name (*hari-nāma*), in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* in the process of *bhakti-sādhana*, in the efficacy of residing in the holy places of India, etc. For this I am eternally indebted to him. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa appeared to me in his merciful incarnation as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmi, to give me truly tangible spiritual life. Later, Kṛṣṇa appeared for me in the form of Śrīla Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura to give me mercy again.

> yadyapi āmār guru caitanyer dāsa,
> tathāpi jāniye āmi tāñhār prakāśa.
> guru kṛṣṇarūpa hana śāstrer pramāṇe,
> gururūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karen bhaktagaṇe.[27]

"Even though my guru is the servant of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, still I know him to be his direct manifestation. The *śāstras* (scriptures) say that the guru is the very form of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa gives mercy to the devotees in the form of the guru."

The Iskcon organization may be suitable for a large number of people throughout the world. I must admit, however, that I am one of those very rare persons who is attracted to *rāgānuga-bhajana* (worship). This treasure I got from Śrīla Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura.

> śrī-vṛndāvana, yugala-bhajana-dhana
> mohe karala upadeśa.[28]

"He instructed me on the treasure of the worship of the divine couple (Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) in Vṛndāvana."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had a large family. Among his many sons, he had two very prominent spiritualists: Śrīla

27. C. c., Ādi, 1. 44-45.
28. Vaiṣṇava Dāsa, *Pada-kalpa-taru*, song 1, p. 1.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and Śrīla Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura. His instructions to these two sons were quite different. He told Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī to establish *maṭhas* (monasteries) and *mandiras* (temples) and to revive the system of *varṇāśrama dharma* (the system of four professions and stages of life, later in a debased form, known as the caste system). His instruction to Lalitā Prasāda was; "You remain at my birthplace in Bīrnagar and practice *rāgānuga-bhajana*. Do not establish any temples or *maṭhas* and do not make many disciples." When Lalitā Prasāda Ṭhākura was eleven years old, Bhaktivinoda gave him spiritual initiation (*mantra-dīkṣā*) as well as *siddha-praṇālī*. For the last forty-one years of his life Śrī Gurudeva sat in one place and daily chanted three *lākhs* (three hundred thousand) holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes symptoms of divine *prema* were visible in his body, symptoms such as: the standing of hair on end, discoloration of the body, trembling and the flowing of saliva like a river from mouth and nose, etc.

He was very merciful to me and gave me Śrīla Bhaktivinoda's personal *dīkṣā* and *siddha-praṇālī*. Beyond this, he gave me two instructions: to worship the forms of Gaura and Gadādhara on the bank of the Gaṅgā in holy Navadvīpa and to chant their names constantly. By his grace, I have been able to follow these instructions up to the present day, and consequently I am starting to get remarkable results.

Jaya Vṛndāvaneśvari Śrī Rādhe!

TIME ENOUGH FOR PLAY: TIME AND WILL IN BENGAL VAIṢṆAVISM

NITĀI DĀS

TIME ENOUGH FOR PLAY:
TIME AND WILL IN BENGAL VAISNAVISM

NITAI DĀS

Introduction

The form of Vaiṣṇavism which flourished under the influence of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has emphasized three forms of religious practice. These are *śravana* (hearing), *kīrtana* (proclaiming) and *smaraṇa* (remembering). These are the main forms of Vaiṣṇava practice and are usually listed in this order in the texts.[1] The reason for this is partially a logical one. *Śravana* must logically precede *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa*. How is it possible to proclaim the tenets of one's faith without having heard them earlier? How is it possible to remember something beyond one's own direct experience without having heard of it earlier from an authority? Therefore, from one point of view, *śravana* is the most important and fundamental of the three forms of religious practice. Through the process of *śravana* one attains a knowledge of the teachings of Vaiṣṇavism and of the *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa and his associates. But knowledge, in and of itself, is not enough. One attains, through hearing, faith in those teachings and a taste for that *līlā*. The acquisition of this faith is not a rational or logical process; it is not the result of a well-structured set of arguments but rather of a conjunction of still mysterious, subterranean forces at work in the non-rational side of man's mental life which create or project a value (in the case of religion, an ultimate value) in what is heard which might not be shared by others.[2] On the basis of the knowledge and faith created by *śravana* one performs *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa*.

The listing in this order of these three practices, however, reveals a deeper process of development in the growth of *bhakti*, or sacred devotion. This process of development is expressed in the movement, in these practices, from passivity to activity.

1. *Bhāg*. 11.3.27 and 7.5.23 (*śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam*). Also *Bhāg*. 2. 1. 5 and 2. 2. 36.
2. Process of the acquistion of faith in various religious beliefs has not yet been properly studied, as far as I know. Such a study, conducted along the lines of a phenomenology, would be of great value for the study of the role of religion in the life of man.

In *śravana* one's role is primarily passive. One receives the message, one listens. In *kīrtana*, however, one moves from a passive role to a more active one. The message that has been previously received, in *kīrtana*, is broadcast anew. The most active stage, however, though it superficially seems the most passive, is *smaraṇa*, for *smaraṇa* is not simply remembering what has been heard. *Smaraṇa* is a form of meditation that involves visualization and spontaneous participation. In Mahāprabhu's Vaiṣṇavism, remembrance entails the construction mentally of the world of Kṛṣṇa along with his *līlā* in that world. More than this, however, the Vaiṣṇava practitioner joins that world and takes an active role in it with a new identity. Thus, *smaraṇa* involves the greatest act of will and a spontaneity of feeling directed towards a world which most people would regard as not only mythical but illusory. To the practitioner, however, the mental world he constructs is a separate and truer reality, for reasons of an ontological nature. The practice, therefore, reveals an ontology (an interpretation of the nature of being) which shall be the subject of this study.

The practice of *smaraṇa* represents an important transition in the spiritual life of the devotee. The Vaiṣṇavas inspired by Mahāprabhu have elaborated, on the basis of certain trends pre-existing in Vaiṣṇava tradition, the practice of *smaraṇa* into what is called *aṣṭakālīya smaraṇa* (remembrance persisting through all eight periods of the day, i.e. 24 hours a day) and have made it a part of the form of practice called *rāgānuga-bhakti*, devotional practice based on the pursuit of the passions for Kṛṣṇa displayed by Kṛṣṇa's close associates in his *līlā*. The following discussion of some of the aspects of *aṣṭakālīya smaraṇa* is based on the conviction that, as the culmination of Vaiṣṇava practice, it embodies some important features of Vaiṣṇava religious experience and theology. It represents the transformation of religious experience into ritual in an attempt to recapture and recreate the religious experience of Mahāprabhu himself. As such, this practice has made that experience available to later followers of the tradition.

Aṣṭakālīya-līlā-smaraṇa

Aṣṭakālīya means 'pertaining to eight time periods' and refers to the division of the twenty-four hour day into eight periods. Two verses are often quoted which name the eight periods and set their lengths.[3]

niśāntaḥ prātaḥ pūrvāhno madhyāhnaś cāparāhnakaḥ
sāyaṁ pradoṣo rātriśca kālā aṣṭau yathākramam
madhyāhno yāminī cobhau ṣaṇmuhūrtamitau smṛtau
trimuhūrtamitā jñeyā niśāntapramukhāḥ pare.

"Night's end, morning, forenoon, midday, afternoon, sunset, late evening and night; these are the eight times in order. Both midday and night are remembered to measure six *muhūrtas*. Night's end and the rest are known to be three *muhūrtas*." A *muhūrta* is a period lasting 48 minutes. Midday and night, therefore, last for four hours and 48 minutes while all the others last two hours and 24 minutes. The beginning of night's end coincides with the beginning of the period called *brāhma-muhūrta*.[4] *Brāhma-muhūrta* is an important period for religious practice. It begins an hour and 36 minutes before sunrise. The texts on practice require that Vaiṣṇava practitioners rise from sleep during this period and begin their daily routine.[5] The rest of the periods follow in turn until the day is over, and the whole cycle starts again the next day.

Līlā has always been a difficult word to translate into English. It is usually translated as 'play, sport or dalliance.' Coomaraswamy's classic discussion of *līlā* in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* seems to apply well here. There, *līlā* is contrasted with work;

The emphasis is, we realise, always upon the idea of a

3. Gopālaguru Gosvāmin (16th-17th cent.), *Śrī-śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇayor Aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā-smaraṇa-krama-paddhatiḥ* verses 2-3. Also quoted in Dhyānacandra's and Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā's *paddhatis*.

4. *Padma Purāṇa*, 4. 52. 11.

5. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. Dhyānacandra, *Gaura-govindār-cana-smaraṇa-paddhati*. Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā, *Sādhanāmṛta-candrikā*.

> "pure" activity that can properly be described as "playful" because the game is played, not as "work" is ordinarily performed with a view to secure some end essential to the worker's wellbeing, but exuberantly; the worker works for what he needs, the player plays because of what he is. The work is laborious, the playing easy; the work exhausting, but the game recreation.[6]

The notion of *līlā* prevalent in Vaiṣṇava thought has been characterized in three ways. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja (16th cent.) glosses the word *līlā* used in the *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* 1.49 with the phrase 'indicating the arousal of various emotions.'[7] Vopadeva (12th cent.) in the *Muktāphala* (11.19) says that it is 'clever action.' Rūpa Gosvāmin says in his *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* that Kṛṣṇa's behavior (*carita*) is of two kinds – *līlā* and consequent feeling (*anubhāva*). *Līlā*, he says, is charming play, dance, playing the flute, milking the cows, lifting mountains and going to and fro, etc.[8]

Among these descriptions, that of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is the most insightful. It suggests that Coomaraswamy's contrast between work and play is somewhat forced. Play may also fulfil certain needs while work need not always be laborious or exhausting. From one point of view, play (if play and *līlā* are indeed equivalent) in order to be enjoyable, depends on certain fictions and, therefore, has little to do with what a person really is. This is especially true of Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* in Vṛndāvana which is based on the fictions of his being a cowherd boy, the friend of Subala, the son of Mother Yaśodā, and the paramour of Rādhā. The theological truth of Kṛṣṇa's position is that he is the supreme being, the source of all other forms of existence. Thus he can really be none of the things mentioned above. In the course of his play he becomes self-forgetful and his asso-

6. JAOS., Vol. 61, 1941, p. 98.
7. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja; *Sāraṅga-raṅgadā-ṭīkā*, 1. 49; *nānā-bhāvodgāra-bhaṅgī.*
8. Rūpa, *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, 10. 43-44.

ciates too forget who and what he is. They become absorbed in the game they play.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's suggestion that *līlā* be distinguished by its object of arousing sundry emotions, especially emotions related to some form of love, seems a more valuable outlook. Rūpa's discussion supports this view as well, in that he has included several actions in *līlā* which we would consider work, e. g. milking cows and lifting mountains. He also talks of *līlā* in the context of the *uddīpana-vibhāvas*. The *uddīpana-vibhāva* is a technical term for something which excites an emotion in a person. Rūpa places Kṛṣṇa's behavior among such *uddīpana-vibhāvas* but not all of his behavior. Some of his actions are called *anubhāva*, another techical term for premeditated acts arising out of an emotion. Thus *līlā* as an *uddīpana* excites emotion and *anubhāva* results from emotion. In this context, we are not talking of ordinary emotion but of emotion (*bhāva*) intensified into *rasa* (emotional pleasure).[9] *Rasa*, then, appears to be the final goal of *līlā*, *līlā* being the course of action which leads to the arousal and enjoyment of *rasa*.

Smaraṇa is the name given to the process by which the practitioner 'cultivates' the *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. *Smaraṇa* literally means 'remembering' and both Rūpa and Jīva (16th cent.) define it. Rūpa says that the mind's connection in whatever way (with something) is called remembrance (*smṛti*).[10] Jīva says remembrance is deliberation with the mind.[11] The important element in these definitions is that *smaraṇa* is practice in which the mind is the central element, and in which the other senses play no necessary part. This effectively distinguishes it from hearing (*śravana*) and glorifying (*kīrtana*), the two other processes of worship mentioned before. Jīva remarks that because *smaraṇa* depends on a purity of the heart (i.e. mind) it comes after hearing and glorifying (which start off the process of *bhakti*).[12]

9. See the essay on *rasa* in this volume.
10. Rūpa, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, 1. 2. 175.
11. Jīva, *Bhakti-sandarbha*, 275.
12. *Ibid.*, 276.

Smaraṇa involves the creative use of the imagination of the practitioner first in visualizing the *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and then in participating in that *līlā*. This is usually preceded by memorization of descriptions of that *līlā*, of maps and diagrams showing the locations of that *līlā* (Rādhā's house, Kṛṣṇa's house, etc.), and of information provided by the guru about his and the disciple's role in the *līlā*. Thus the imagination is controlled and guided by the collective experiences of the teachers of this practice.

Jīva, in his usual scholastic manner, distinguishes five kinds of *smaraṇa* in ascending order of power. These five are *smaraṇa*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, *dhruvānusmṛti*, and *samādhi*. *Smaraṇa* is haphazard reflection. *Dhāraṇā* is drawing the mind away from everything and holding it within in a general way. *Dhyāna* is thinking of the forms, etc. (of the divinity) in a particular way. *Dhruvānusmṛti* is the same but without any break like an unbroken flow of nectar. *Samādhi* is the appearance of the object of meditation itself.[13] The practice of *smaraṇa* we are concerned with here progresses through these stages.

Sources

The earliest written description of the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* appears to be that in the *Padma Purāṇa*, *Pātāla-khaṇḍa*, chapter 52.[14] It is not labeled *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* there nor is it divided overtly into eight parts. It is called simply the *naityaka* or perpetual *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa. The *Purāṇa* describes the constantly repeated cycle of daily actions in the life of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. The same description of this cycle is found in a work called the *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā*.[15] A portion of it quoted in other works,

13. *Ibid.*, 278.
14. S. K. De thinks that this section was written after the Vṛndāvana Gosvāmins because it fits so well their view.
15. Apparently published at the end of a work called *Purāṇa-saṁhita* by the Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office in four fascicles. Smith briefly describes this text in *The Smith Āgama Collection: Sanskrit Books and Manuscripts Relating to Pañcarātra Studies*, pp. 177-78.

such as Gopālaguru's (16th-17th cent.) *Aṣṭakālīya-līlā-smaraṇa krama-paddhati*, coincides almost verbatum with the *Padma Purāṇa* passage,[16] This *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* should not be confused with the Pañcarātra text nor the *Śiva Purāṇa* text of the same name. This text is a work dealing with the esoteric worship of Rādhā aud Kṛṣṇa.[17] The *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* may have been a large work out of which only a few chapters have survived. The description of the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* is found in chapter 36 of the text, as is the description of the *mañjarī-svarūpa*.[18] Chapter 55 of this work exists in manuscript form as yet unpublished.[19]

Next come the eleven verses attributed to Rūpa Gosvāmin called the *Aṣṭakālīya-līlā-smaraṇa-maṅgala-stotram* which are said to have provided the inspiration of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's massive *Govinda-līlāmṛta*.[20] Each of the eight divisions is described in one verse except for night *līlā* which gets the last two. These nine plus an introductory verse and a brief summary of all eight *līlās* in one verse make eleven. A commentary has been written on these verses, or ten of them at least, called the *Daśa-ślokī-bhāṣya*. The author of this commentary is Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa who was a disciple of Haridāsa Paṇḍita. Haridāsa Paṇḍita was a head priest of the Govindajī temple in Vṛndāvana and was one of those who requested Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja to write the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.[21] Rādhākṛṣṇa

16. Either the *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* was incorporated into the *Padma Purāṇa* at some point, or it was taken from it. It is impossible to tell which. The only reference to the *Padma Purāṇa* passage I have seen, however, is from a 19th century work while the *Sanatkumāra-saṁhitā* is quoted as early as the end of the 16th century.
17. If this is the same work that Smith notices. See footnote 15.
18. Published by Haridāsa Śāstrī, Vṛndāvana: Śrī Haridāsa Śāstrī, 1980. The description of the *mañjarī-svarūpa* is found in verses 36. 184-188 (corresponding to *Padma Purāṇa*, 4. 52. 7-11) and the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* is found in verses 36. 195-285 (*Padma Purāṇa*, 4. 52. 18-105).
19. *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. ii.
20. De, pp. 155 and 599.
21. C. c., Ādi, 8. 54-65.

Dāsa writing in the second and third quarters of the 17th century gave an extended treatment to the first two verses of the eleven. The remaining eight (he does not recognize the eleventh verse) he treated briefly, primarily contenting himself with citing the passages of the *Govinda-līlāmṛta* which illustrate them.

In his introduction to the first verse, Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa says that Śrī Caitanya incarnated to teach various types of *bhakti* to various kinds of *bhaktas* according to their own tastes. He taught the kind of *bhakti* that he himself practiced to Rūpa Gosvāmin secretly.[22] Rūpa, though he described it as the main form of *bhakti* and expressed it through hymns, etc., never explained the manner of practicing this kind of *bhakti* in any one place or in an ordered way. This he did in order to hide it from those who were not his own followers because of its extremely confidential nature. When, however, because of the enthusiasm of his followers, he made up his mind to describe it, his death was near at hand. Realizing this, he taught it to the most qualified of all, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, in its entirety, extracting a promise from him that he would publish it. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, therefore, wrote the huge *kāvya* (poem) *Govinda-līlāmṛta* describing the perpetual *līlās* of the Lord. Furthermore, to teach this form of *bhakti* very briefly to beginners he wrote the *Daśa-ślokī* (the ten verses) on the perpetual *līlā* of the Lord weaving in the conclusions of theology.[23]

It is hard to determine the validity of these statements. Mahāprabhu's practice of *aṣṭakālīya smaraṇa* is not mentioned in any biography. This does not mean that he did not practice it, or something akin to it. He may have even taught it to Rūpa. Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa's authority on Rūpa's teaching it to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja and on these verses being written by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is of greater weight. Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa may

22. D. s. bh., p. 2.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 9-10.

have met Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja at the end of the latter's life or, if not, heard about what he describes from his guru Haridāsa Paṇḍita. From the evidence Rādhākṛṣṇa Dāsa gives and the stylistic evidence of the verses themselves, one, at least, can conclude that Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja wrote these ten (or eleven) verses.

Kavi Karṇapūra (16th century) wrote a *kāvya* (poem) called the *Kṛṣṇāhnika-kaumudī* which treats the same daily cycle.[24] Though the eight periods are not explicitly noticed in this work, the day and night cycle is complete. Since, in the sequence of events within some *līlās*, this work contains a few minor deviations from the other works of the school, it may have been independently conceived.[25]

The *Govinda-līlāmṛta* by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is the most exhaustive treatment of the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā*.[26] The eleven verses mentioned above are embedded in the body of this text at the beginnings of each of the eight divisions of *līlā*. Curiously, De overlooked this and says he edited the eleven verses from a single 'somewhat corrupt' manuscript belonging to the Baṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad.[27] This lends further support to the conten-

24. Edited and published by Haridāsa Dāsa, 1941. An incomplete work beginning with the same first verse is noticed by Wilson, *Love of Kṛṣṇa* (introduction), as attributed to Bilvamaṅgala. The mss. that Haridāsa Dāsa dealt with identify this as Karṇapūra's, however.
25. Rādhā does not eat right after Kṛṣṇa as she does in the other works. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet on the bank of the Yamunā instead of at Rādhā Kuṇḍa. Kṛṣṇa and his father eat before milking the cows in the evening instead of after. At night Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet in a garden near Nandagrāma instead of on the bank of the Yamunā. See Haridāsa Dāsa's introduction to the *Kaumudī*.
26. Edited and published by Haridāsa Dāsa, 1949.
27. De, 673-675. It seems odd that he would not have recognized these verses placed as they are at important junctures of the text when he himself read the *Govinda-līlāmṛta*. This leads me to suspect that De did not actually read the text in the original. It is extremely disturbing to think that he had not read in the original the book about which he said; "the extremely artificial and learned character of this astonishing literary atrocity is obvious...." pp. 610-11.

tion that the verses were written by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja while satisfying De's critical appraisal of them as 'pedestrian.'[28] This poem was translated into Bengali verse by Yadunandana Dāsa in a work called *Govinda-līlāmṛta-rasa* in the 17th century. It was, therefore, easily available to later Vaiṣṇavas not knowing Sanskrit.

Viśvanātha Cakravartin's *Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta* is another long (20 chapters) *kāvya* on the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā*.[29] This text is quite special in that it describes the confidential *līlās* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in more erotic detail than the other texts. In general, this is characteristic of the poetic works of Viśvanātha Cakravartin. In the first chapter of this work, for instance, seven verses (nos. 9-15) describe the beauty of the loving couple asleep in an embrace after spending the night in intense love-making. Their clothes, jewel ornaments and garlands are scattered around the forest bower and their bodies are marked with scratches and bites of passion.[30] Only five of the eight periods are explicitly mentioned in this text, the tendency being to treat the various *līlās* of Kṛṣṇa as headings instead. Nevertheless, the cycle of *līlā* is complete and tends to follow the description and order of the *Govinda-līlāmṛta*.

Another work worth noting is the *Bhāvanā-sāra-saṅgraha* which is actually a compilation of verses from 34 other works including those just mentioned. Its compiler, Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā (18th-19th cent.), selected and arranged nearly three thousand verses into eight parts according to the eight divisions of *līlā* in such a way that this book is practically all a practi-

28. De, *ibid.*, p. 675. Haridāsa Śāstrī has recently published an edition of this work. The commentator named Vṛndāvana Cakravartin (said to be a disciple of Viśvanātha Cakravartin, 17th-18th cent.), claims the verses are indeed by Rūpa Gosvāmin.
29. Two editions of this text have been published. A Bengali translation of it was published in the last century by Nityasvarūpa Brahmacārī. See Bibliography.
30. K. bh., 1. 9-15.

tioner needs for the practice of *smaraṇa.*[31] One of the interesting features of this collection is that, though most of the verses come from the *Govinda-līlāmṛta* and the *Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā also uses material from other poetic and dramatic works which are not strictly devoted to *aṣṭakālīya-līlā*.

Vaiṣṇava Practice

A few words must be said about Vaiṣṇava practice or *sādhana-bhakti* before we move on to the description of the *līlā*. As is well known, Vaiṣṇava practice is divided into two types: *vaidhi* and *rāgānuga*. *Vaidhi* is practice motivated by the *vidhis* or regulations of scripture. It is performed out of duty, to obey the rules. *Rāgānuga* is motivated by a spontaneous attraction felt by the practitioner towards the object of his worship. The practitioner acts out of an awakened desire, though it may be a weak desire, not out of a sense of duty. These are two alternative forms of devotional practice. These lead to two different kinds of devotional feeling (*bhāva*) and love (*prema*). *Aṣṭakālīya-līlā-smaraṇa* is meant to be practiced in the *rāgānuga* form of *bhakti*. Rūpa describes *rāgānuga* in three verses in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu.*[32]

kṛṣṇaṁ smaran janaṁ cāsya preṣṭhaṁ nija-samīhitaṁ
tat-tat-kathā-rataś cāsau kuryād vāsaṁ vraje sadā
sevā sādhaka-rūpena siddha-rūpena cātra hi
tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā vraja-lokānusārataḥ
śravaṇotkīrtanādīni vaidha-bhakty-uditāni tu
yāny aṅgāni ca tāny atra vijñeyāni manīṣibhiḥ.

"One should remember Kṛṣṇa and a person dear to him to whom one is attracted, listen to stories about them and always reside in Vraja. In this (form of *bhakti*), one who desires their feelings should perform service as a *sādhaka* (practitioner) and as an accomplished *bhakta* following (the example of) the

31. Haridāsa Dāsa, *Śrī Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sāhitya*, p. 133. This was recently reprinted with a Bengali translation from Haribol Kuṭīr, 1983.
32. Rūpa, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, 1. 2. 294-6.

people of Vraja. Those practices such as hearing and glorifying, etc. which were described as parts of *vaidhi-bhakti,* the wise understand (to apply) here too." Here Rūpa specifically mentions remembering, *smaraṇa.* Also, he refers to two modes of service: that done by the practitioner's (*sādhaka*) form and that done by accomplished (*siddha*) form. The *sādhaka* form or body is the physical body and identity of the practitioner. The *sidhha* form or body is the practitioner's mentally conceived form suitable for *līlā*. It is either produced in the course of practice or given by the guru in a special initiation.[33] The *siddha-deha* is essential for the practice of *rāgānuga-bhakti* and *aṣṭakālīya līlā-smaraṇa.* We will see later what this *siddha-deha* usually is in Bengal Vaiṣṇavism.

The Līlā

General Remarks

Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* is divided into two types: *naimittika* and *naityaka.* There seem to be two interpretations of these terms. S. K. De, taking these in the light of the Pūrva-mimāṁsā school of Indian philosophy, says that *naimittika* means 'occasional' and *naityaka* 'regular.' These terms in the Pūrva-mīmāṁsā refer to two different kinds of rituals. *Naimittika* rituals are performed occasionally and are optional while the *naityaka* rituals are performed regularly and are required. Thus, daily bath, recitation of *gāyatrī*, *pūjā* (worship) or *homa* (sacrifice) are *naityaka* and must be performed daily. *Naimittika* rituals are rituals such as sacrifices for acquiring sons, causing rain, overcoming past sins, etc. They occur occasionally and are beneficial but not necessary. With this in mind, De says that *naityaka līlā* means sports between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that occur on a regular or daily basis. *Naimittika līlā* occurs on an occasional or 'detached' basis; for example, the *dāna-līlā* tax collecting episode) or the *naukā-līlā* (boat episode).

33. Today it is usually the latter, an initiation called the *siddha-praṇālī-dīkṣā.*

Another opinion is that *naityaka* refers to those parts of the *līlā* that have nothing to do with mundane requirements placed on incarnations in the material world. In other words, once the six transformations (birth, being, growth, transformation, decay and death) are removed from the *līlā* along wlth all other incidental activities, such as killing demons, one has *naityaka līlā*. *Naimittika līlā* would thus be Kṛṣṇa's birth, early childhood and growth and the killing of demons, and *naityaka* would be a synchronic slice of that *līlā* free of those activities. *Naityaka līlā* is not just any slice of that *naimittika līlā*, however. It is the slice which involves Kṛṣṇa's love affair with Rādhā. *Naimittika līlā* is diachronic and *naityaka* is synchronic.

This last distinction is reflected in two other distinctions made in *līlā*. *Līlā* is either *prakaṭa*, manifest, or *aprakaṭa* unmanifest. Manifest *līlā* contains both *naimittika* and *naityaka* Manifest *līlā* is called 'descent' (*avatāra*) and is what is believed to have happened in India thousands of years ago before the eyes of all. Unmanifest is still going on in Vṛndāvana and is visible only to those qualified to see it. *Aṣṭakālīya-līlā* is of the second type.

Eleven Verses

I have chosen to translate the eleven verses of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja because they present in a nutshell the cycle of *līlā*. This skeleton presentation, however, does no justice to the charming elaborations the events of this *līlā* receive in the hands of the authors already mentioned. To the faithful, the effect of remembering them moves beyond charm to wonder (*camatkāra*) the essential element in the *bhakti-rasa* experience.[34]

1. I praise the perpetual activities of Vraja in order to proclaim now the mental service of Kṛṣṇa which is to be practiced by those on the path of passion and by which the service of love at the lotus feet of the friend of the life of

34. See Kavi Karṇapūra's definition of *rasa* in *Alaṅkāra-kaustubha*, 5.14.

Rādhā is obtained. That service (though) beyond the reach of Brahmā, Śiva, Ananta-śeṣa, etc. and (though) only gained by intense longing is acquired by those intent on the episodes of Vraja.[35]

2. May he protect us who at night's end enters the cow encampment from the bower, in the morning and evening milks the cows and eats his meals, at midday enjoys *līlā* in mock battle with his friends and herds the cows, at night sports in the forest with Rādhā, in the afternoon returns to the encampment and in the late evening pleases his friends.[36]
3. I remember Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa at night's end awakened at fearful Vṛndā's prompting by many sounds among which are songs of parrots and *sārikās* which though brusque are charming. Those two (Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) arisen from their bed of joy, looked upon and pleased by their girlfriends, tremulous from the passion that arises at that time but fearful of the warning of Kakkhaṭī, though full of desire, return to their beds in their own homes.[37]
4. I take shelter of Rādhā who, bathed and decorated, is called to Vrajapurī at daybreak with her friends. In his (Kṛṣṇa's) house, she cooks appropriate food, and eats Kṛṣṇa's leftovers. I also take shelter of Kṛṣṇa who awakes,

35. śrī-rādhā-prāṇa-bandhoś caraṇa-kamalayoḥ keśa-ś.ṣādy-agamyā
yā sādhyā prema-sevā vraja-carita-parair gāḍha-laulyaika-labhyā
sā syāt prāptā yayā tāṁ prathayitum adhunā mānasīm asya sevāṁ
bhāvyāṁ rāgādhva-pānthair vrajaṁ anu caritaṁ naityakaṁ tasya naumi.

36. kuñjād goṣṭhaṁ niśānte praviśati kurute dohanānnāśanādyāṁ
prātaḥ sāyaṁ ca līlāṁ viharati sakhībhiḥ saṅgave cārayan gāḥ
madhyāhne cātha naktaṁ vilasati vipine rādhayādūhāparāhne
goṣṭhaṁ yāti pradoṣe ramayati suhṛdo yaḥ sa kṛṣṇo 'vatān naḥ.

37. rātryante trasta-vṛnderita-bahuviravair bodhitau kīra-sārī–
padyair hṛdyair ahṛdyair api sukha-śayanād utthitau tau sakhībhiḥ
dṛṣṭau hṛṣṭau tadātvodita-ratilalitau kakkhaṭī-gīḥ-saśaṅkau
rādhākṛṣṇau satṛṣṇāvapi nija-nija-dhāmny āptatalpau smarāmi.

goes to the cowshed and milks the cows. Having bathed, he eats along with his friends.[38]

5. I recall Kṛṣṇa in the forenoon followed by his cows and friends to the forest and (for a distance) by all the people of the encampment. Desirous of obtaining Rādhā, when the secret meeting with her is arranged, he goes to the bank of her pond. And I recall Rādhā who, having watched Kṛṣṇa depart, returned home. Being instructed by an elder to worship the sun, she watches the path for her girlfriend with news of Kṛṣṇa.[39]

6. At midday, I remember Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, full of desire, being served by their attendants, enchanted by various ornament-like physical transformations arising out of meeting one another, trembling with longing and coyness, beautified by the play of girlfriends such as Lalitā, etc, who are worshiped by the god of love, engaged in *līlās* such as swinging, forest play, water games, stealing the flute, love-making, drinking honey wine, worship of the sun, etc.[40]

7. I remember Rādhā in the afternoon; returning to her house. Having arranged various gifts for her lover, bathed and beautifully dressed, she is filled with pleasure by the sight of the lotus face of her dear one. And I remember Kṛṣṇa who is followed to the encampment by the cows and his friends, pleased by the sight of Rādhā, greeted

38. rādhāṁ snātavi hūṣitāṁ vraja-puryāhūtāṁ sakhībhiḥ prage
tad-gehe vihitānna-pāka-racanāṁ kṛṣṇāvaśeṣāśanāṁ
kṛṣṇaṁ buddhaṁ avāptadhenusadanaṁ nirvyūḍha-go-dohanaṁ
susnātaṁ kṛta-bhojanaṁ sahacarais tāṁ cātha taṁ cāśraye.

39. pūrvāhne dhenumitrair vipinam anusṛtaṁ goṣṭha-lokānuyātaṁ
kṛṣṇaṁ rādhāptilolaṁ tadabhisṛtikṛte prāpta-tatkuṇḍa-tīraṁ
rādhāṁ cālokya kṛṣṇaṁ kṛta-gṛha-gamanāṁ āryayārkārcanāyai
diṣṭāṁ kṛṣṇa-pravṛttyai prahitanija-sakhī-vartma-netrāṁ smarāmi.

40. madhyāhne'nyonya-saṅgodita-vividhavikārādi-bhūṣāpramugdhau
vāmyotkaṇṭhātilolau smaramakha-lalitādyāli-narmāptaśātau
dolāraṇyāmbu-vaṁśīhṛti-rati-madhupānārka-pūjādi-līlau
rādhākṛṣṇau satṛṣṇau parijanaghaṭayā sevyamānau smarāmi

by the smile of his father and bathed and dressed by his mother.[41]

8. I remember Rādhā at sunset, who sends with her friends many foods for her lover, and whose heart is overjoyed at eating the leftovers of her Lord brought by them; and the moon of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa) who, bathed and beautifully dressed, caressed by his mother, goes to the cowshed, completes milking the cows, returns again to his house and eats.[42]

9. I remember that Rādhā in the late evening along with her attendants, dressing suitably for a light or dark night and, at the instruction of Vṛndā, making an assignation (with Kṛṣṇa) by means of a messenger at a bower of desire-trees on the bank of the Yamunā; and Kṛṣṇa watching the arts of experts in the assembly with the cowherdsmen. Having been brought home with care by his affectionate mother and put to bed, he now secretly steals away to the bower.[43]

10. I remember those two, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, who, having obtained each other, are pleased by the many services of Vṛndā, and who enjoy songs, games, riddles, sweet talk, plays and the *rāsa* and *lāsya* dances along with their most beloved friends.[44] Their desires are bent on love-making; they drink pressed Mādhvīka punch and are masters of

41. śrīrādhāṁ prāpta-gehāṁ nija-ramaṇakṛte kḷptanānopahārāṁ
susnātāṁ ramyaveśāṁ priyamukhakamalāloka-pūrṇa-pramodāṁ
kṛṣṇaṁ caivāparāhne vrajam anucalitaṁ dhenuvṛndair vayasyaiḥ
śrīrādhālokatṛptaṁ pitṛmukha-militaṁ mātṛ-mṛṣṭaṁ smarāmi

42. sāyaṁ rādhāṁ svasakhyā nija-ramaṇakṛte preṣitāneka-bhojyāṁ
sakhyānīteśa-śeṣāśana-muditahṛdāṁ tāṁ ca taṁ ca vrajenduṁ
susnātaṁ ramyaveśaṁ gṛham anu jananīlālitaṁ prāpta-goṣṭhaṁ
nirvyūḍhosrāli-dohaṁ svagṛham anu punar bhuktavantaṁ smarāmi

43. rādhāṁ sālīgaṇāṁ tām asita-sita-niśāyogya-veṣāṁ pradoṣe
dūtyā vṛndopadeśād abhisṛta-yamunātīra-kalpaga-kuñjāṁ
kṛṣṇam gopaiḥ sabhāyāṁ vihita-guṇi-kalālokanaṁ snigdha-mātrā
yātnād ānīya saṁśayitam atha nibhṛtaṁ prāpta-kuñjaṁ smarāmi.

44. *Rāsa* and *lāsya* are different kinds of night-time dances. The *rāsa* dance is a circle dance, and the *lāsya* dance is a dance in which the gestures suggest different feelings of love (according to Apte).

games. Their hearts are expanded by boldness in various battles of love in the bower.[45]

11. Those two, being served with love by means of *tāmbūla*, fragrant garlands, fans, cold water and foot massages, are beautified by their loving friends; when their girlfriends have fallen asleep in their bowers amidst the vocal urgings of the lovers filled with the sentiments of secret love-making Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa fall asleep in the dead of night on their bed of flower blossoms.[46]

What has to be added to this description is the perspective from which this *līlā* is to be viewed by the practitioner. This involves the active, imaginative participation of the practitioner in the *līlā*. The role assumed in this *līlā* is that of one of the young female attendants of Rādhā, an identity that has come to be called the *mañjarī-svarūpa*. Though not mentioned in the eleven verses just translated, the *Padma Purāṇa* passage previously mentioned gives an indication of this *mañjarī-svarūpa* which is more fully developed by later writers.

"One should think of oneself, there, among those (*gopīs*) as a mind-pleasing girl, an adolescent possessed of youth and beauty, well-versed in the fine and practical arts, suitable for the enjoyment of Kṛṣṇa, who even though solicited by Kṛṣṇa is uninterested in personal enjoyment (with him), a follower of Rādhikā always intent on serving her, who loves Rādhikā even more than Kṛṣṇa and who, daily, with affection and care, brings about their union, being extraordinarily overjoyed by the pleasure of the happiness of serving them. Thinking of oneself thus, one should perform service there beginning from *brāhma-muhūrta* until the dead of night."[47]

45. tāv utkau labdha-saṅgau bahuparicaraṇair vṛndayā'rādhyamānau
gaṇair narma-praheli-sulāpana-naṭanaiḥ rāsa-lāsyādi-raṅgaiḥ
preṣṭhālibhir lasantau ratigatamānasau mṛṣṭa-mādhvīka-pānau
krīḍācāryau nikuñje vividha-ratiraṇauddhatya-vistāritāntau.

46. tāmbūlair gandhamālyair vyajana-himapayaḥ-pādasaṁvāhanādyaiḥ
premnā saṁsevyamānau praṇayi-sahacarī-sañcayenāptaśātau
vācā kānteraṇabhir nibhṛta-rati-rasaiḥ kuñjasuptālisaṅghau
rādhākṛṣṇau niśāyāṁ sukusumaśayane prāptanidrau smarāmi.

47. *Padma Purāṇa* 4. 52. 7-11;

Therefore, these *līlās* are to be envisioned and participated in in the form of *mañjarī* which corresponds to what has been called previously the *siddha-deha* or accomplished body.[48]

The *sādhaka-deha* or physical body is not forgotten, however. Rūpa required the performance of service with both bodies. The latter *paddhatis*, small treatises on practice, such as the *Sādhanāmṛta-candrikā* by Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā integrate the two levels of practice completely. Every moment of the day is filled either with outer service or inner service. Since Siddha Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābā translated his *paddhati* into Bengali *payāra* making it available to the non-Sanskrit-knowing devotee, hundreds of *guṭikās*, the modern counterpart to the *paddhatis*, have been written in Bengali. Some have been published but many more were only passed down from master to disciple.

Reflections on the Practice

General reflection on this practice reveals some interesting features of post-Mahāprabhu Vaiṣṇavism not generally recognized. For instance, the story-like nature of the *līlā*, with one event leading to another in an endless cycle, is highly conducive to sustained and unbroken contemplation. The *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* is ideal for the practice of *smaraṇa* which gradually grows stronger until it becomes a constant and unbroken flow like a flow of 'nectar,' as Jīva Gosvāmin has described it.

ātmānaṁ cintayet tatra tāsāṁ madhye manoramāṁ
rūpa-yauvana-sampannāṁ kiśorīṁ pramadākṛtim
nānā-śilpa-kalābhijñāṁ kṛṣṇa-bhogānurūpinīṁ
prathitām api kṛṣṇena tatra bhoga-parāṅmukhīm
rādhikānucārīṁ nityaṁ tat-sevana-parāyānāṁ
kṛṣṇād apy adhikaṁ prema rādhikāyāṁ prakurvatīṁ
prītyānudivasaṁ yatnāt tayoḥ saṅgama-kārinīṁ
tat-sevana-sukhāhlāda-bhāvenātisunirvṛtām
ityātmānaṁ vicintyaiva tatra sevāṁ samācaret
brāhmaṁ muhūrtam ārabhya yāvat syāt tu mahāniśā

48. The *mañjarī-svarūpa* is not the only recorded *siddha-deha*. The other form which practitioners sometimes assume in Bengali Vaiṣṇavism is the *sakhya-svarūpa*, the friend of Kṛṣṇa. A few works on this type of *bhakti*, called *preyo-bhakti*, have been published.

This unbroken contemplation is the fourth and penultimate stage of *smaraṇa*. The last is the actual appearance of the *līlā* before one's mental vision. This kind of contemplation shows a strong yogic and tāntric influence on the practice of Vaiṣṇavism. In other words, it shows that Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* (devotion) is meditative and requires self-initiative. Vaiṣṇavism does not consist simply of expressions of 'creatureliness' and helplessness before God, i. e. through prayers, submissions, obeisances, etc. Nevertheless, there is one important way in which Vaiṣṇava meditation is different from yogic or tāntric meditation; the 'script' of this *līlā*, though in a general way already established, is an open one into which the practitioner may add his own events and embellishments. This adds a new dimension to contemplation. Contemplation of this spontaneous sort may be unique to this form of Vaiṣṇavism in India. It indicates the primacy of will in the faith, more about which will be said later.

A second aspect of the practice centers around the experience encountered in it, that is, *bhakti-rasa*. The perpetual *līlā* provides a structure within which many different *rasas* may arise. *Rasa* is the experience of pleasure associated with emotion aroused under certain special conditions.[49] The *līlā* provides the circumstances for the arousal of all five major *rasas* of Vaiṣṇava devotional experience. The chief *rasa* in this *līlā* is, of course, *madhura*, the erotic emotional pleasure. This *rasa*, however, includes all the qualities of the other *rasas*.[50] *Madhura* is divided into two aspects – *sambhoga* (erotic enjoyment) and *vipralambha* (separation from the beloved). Both of these are found in the *līlā*. In addition, *vātsalya* (parental emotional pleasure), *sakhya* (friendly emotional pleasure) and *dāsya* (the emotional pleasure of service) are also present in the *līlā*. *Madhura*, however, is the most prominent of all the *rasas*. Because the *līlā* is a chain of events periodically

49. See the article in this volume on *rasa* for an extended discussion of this topic.

50. C. c., Madhya, 8. 85-87.

progressing, this kind of variation in *rasa* is possible. The *līlā*, thus, becomes the source of many of the important religious experiences for the practitioner.

These reflections on the perpetual *līlā* point to the role and importance of time in Vaiṣṇava practice and meditation. Time is a central aspect of the *aṣṭakālīya* process. The completeness of the *līlā* allows the practitioner at every moment of the day to remember the objects of his worship.[51] Filling the day with thought of the *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa transforms the temporal into the eternal. That is, *līlā* supplies a new meaning to the ordinary day. One lives as part of an eternal, repeating day and not as part of an historical, nonrecoverable day.

From another angle, all Vaiṣṇavas agree that the *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is beyond time; it is timeless. Nevertheless, *līlā* with respect to itself, that is, internally, has time. Time within *līlā* allows a variety of situations in which the different moods and emotions of love can be felt. Time serves *līlā* rather than limits it. For the practitioner, time loses its morbid nature as the harbinger of decay and death and comes to symbolize life and love. Time itself conducts him into the eternal and then provides that eternal with the fullness of the whole spectrum of *rasa*.

Another important aspect of the practice is visualization. This is not a new practice in India. It was perfected by the Tāntric Buddhists in their meditations in the first millenium of the Christian era. Visualization, in order to be successful, takes a great deal of repeated effort. For most, it involves a great exertion of will to construct an inner or mental world, people it and bring it to life. This practice is a move away from the physical world towards the mental world of consciousness and reveals the priority of consciousness over matter in

51. The essence of all rules for Bengali Vaiṣṇavas is the oft quoted verse; *smartavyaḥ satataṁ viṣṇur vismartavyo na jātucit| sarve vidhi-niṣedhāḥ syur etayor eva kiṅkarāḥ.* (Viṣṇu is always to be remembered and never forgotten. All injunctions and prohibitions are the servants of these two.) *Padma Purāṇa*, 72. 100.

this form of Vaiṣṇavism. In the mental Vṛndāvana, things can be just as one wants them to be. One exercises a freedom unknown in the physical world, creates a perfection there never found here. The will, the imagination, the deep-rooted desire for divine company,[52] all flow freely to form this world and life in the mind. The world in the mind and the world of Kṛṣṇa are connected by the guidelines provided in the poetic descriptions of the texts mentioned earlier. Those texts are not merely the productions of poets but of seers of the *līlā;* such is the faith of practicing Vaiṣṇavas. When those guidelines are followed and the *līlā* is envisioned according to one's own developing devotional love for Kṛṣṇa, the Vṛndāvana of Kṛṣṇa appears in the Vṛndāvana of the mind.[53] This is the point of revelation when the practitioner directly sees and participates in the *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

During the course of the gradual improvement and clarification of the *līlā* through visualization, another development occurs. The identity of the practitioner shifts from the identity connected with the physical body to that connected with the 'perfected' or mental body. In male practitioners this is a drastic shift for it entails crossing the threshold of sexuality and adopting a female identity (the *mañjarī-svarūpa*). Of course, this is only true for those who are attracted to the erotic sentiment. Those who are attracted to the sentiment of friendship, *sakhya*, retain their maleness and merely adopt new personalities and appearances as cowherd boys. Women practitioners in the erotic sentiment remain female but adopt new personalities and appearances. The only male in Kṛṣṇa's erotic *līlā* is Kṛṣṇa

52. Compare with Van der Leeuw's discussion of the role of the feeling of solitude in religion. *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, Volume 1.

53. It is interesting to compare this visualization with lucid dreaming. Perhaps it is the state of the lucid dream which the Vaiṣṇava tries to achieve here. Dreaming is an important element in many religious systems. 'Dreaming' in the religious world of a Yaqui sorcerer is central and appears to be a process of gaining control over dreams. (See the works of Carlos Castaneda on this point.)

and, in order to enter that *līlā*, one must become female. During the *siddha-praṇālī* initiation, the disciple is given a new name, new appearance, new type of service and even a new address. On the basis of this information, which the guru gives the disciple, a new identity is constructed, an identity fit for Kṛṣṇa's eternal *līlā*. Through practice the new identity overshadows the old and there have been cases of male practitioners donning female attire physically under the influence of their new identities.[54] Here again the will plays a major role in Vaiṣṇava practice. One literally wills oneself into a new form of being.

Nietzsche

A practice such as this which deals with time and will in such a manner brings to mind the great western thinker Nietzsche. On a metaphysical level this practice may be compared with his conception of 'deliverence from revenge.' Heidegger provides an interesting discussion of this conception in his short book, *What is Called Thinking*? There he quotes Nietzsche's definition of revenge from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*;[55]

> This, yes, this alone is revenge itself: the will's revulsion against time and its 'It was.'

According to Nietzsche, this revenge is what has characterized man's relationship to the world up to the present and it is a 'deliverence from revenge' that Nietzsche hoped to find embodied in his 'superman,' the man of the future;

> For that man be delivered from revenge; that is for me the bridge to the highest hope...[56]

Heidegger points out two important aspects of Nietzsche's revulsion of the will towards time. First, according to him, will or willing is the primary and essential attribute of being in Western metaphysical thought. He cites a passage from Schelling's *Philosophical Investigation Concerning the*

54. Lalitā Sakhī of the Nitāi Gaura Rādhe Syāma subsect.
55. Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking*, p. 93.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Nature of Human Freedom and Its Object in support of this contention;[57]

> In the final and highest instance, there is no being other than willing. Willing is primal being and to it alone (willing) belong all (primal being's) predicates: being unconditioned, eternity, independence of time, self-affirmation. All philosophy strives only to find this highest expression.

Willing, therefore, is the Being of beings, and thus, the revulsion of the will is the revulsion of being itself towards time. Secondly, time is characterized in Nietzsche's portrayal as 'It was.' This, Heidegger explains, represents Western thought's primary conception of time as 'that which passes away.' In support of this he traces the Western philosophical conception of time back to Aristotle's discussion *Physics*, IV, 10-14.[58] Thus revenge is Being's revulsion against that which passes away.

How is one 'delivered' from this revenge? According to Heidegger;[59]

> Deliverance from revenge is the transition, from the will's revulsion against time and its 'It was,' to the will that eternally wills the recurrence of the same and in this willing wills itself as its own ground. Deliverance from revenge is the transition to the primal being of all beings.

The will escapes revenge by willing the eternal recurrence of the same. The will invokes a cycle of time in which the events that occur are constantly becoming present, that is they repeatedly return to being and never fade away forever into non-being or absence. The events of ordinary time, in contrast, are only fleetingly present before sinking into non-existence forever. Their being, therefore, is only fleeting being.

What this meant for Nietzsche will be discussed later.[60]

57. *Ibid.*, p. 90-91.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-102.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.
60. It may be fruitful to reflect, in this connection, on Mircea Eliade's

A similar conception of the eternal recurrence of the same is a part of the Vaiṣṇava vision of eternity. A similar act of will invokes that recurrence; a form of will which in the West is the truest expression of the Being of beings. Furthermore, the predominant idea of time in Indian philosophy is similar to that of Heidegger's West. Time in India is *kāla* which, by extension of meaning, stands for death as well.[61] Thus, time represents the passing away of all things; it is death which devours all. The will willing 'itself as its own ground' is also the path of deliverance for many Indian philosophers, though different philosophers have spoken of it in different ways. The place of will in Vaiṣṇava practice has been discussed previously.

For Nietzsche, as for the Vaiṣṇavas, the thought of the eternal recurrence of the same bridges the gap between becoming and being. Heidegger quotes from *The Will to Power*, paragraph 617;[62]

> That everything recurs is the extremest approximation of a world of Becoming to the world of Being—the high point of meditation.

The Vaiṣṇavas in their cycle of *līlā* approximate the hours of the day to the parts the eternally recurring *līlā* and thus the world of Becoming and the world of Being are joined together. This is the most obvious form of the 'approximation.' Another form occurs within the *līlā* itself for the *līlā* is always 'becoming' itself. That is, since the *līlā* moves from event to event it is constantly developing, yet it is always the same. One might object that such an eternal recurrence of the same would certainly become stale. For the Vaiṣṇavas, however, there is a very important aspect of this *līlā* which keeps it from becoming old or stale. This particular aspect of the *līlā* makes it con-

great discovery in the history of religions of the 'notalgia for beginnings,' the constant attempt in religious ritual to recapture or return to primordial or 'mythic' time, the sacred time of the great acts of creation or sacrifice. See his *The Myth of the Eternal Return*.

61. Bh. g., 11. 32. *Kālo'smi lokakṣayakṛt*.

62. Heidegger, p. 108.

stantly newer and fresher, more enjoyable, though the events themselves are more or less the same. This power whose characteristic is making the old new is a special type of sacred love called *anurāga*. One who has *anurāga* never grows tired of the object of one's love.[63]

A hint of this *anurāga* is found in Nietzsche as well. Take, for instance, his famous passage from *The Gay Science* entitled "The Heaviest Burden;"[64]

> What if a demon crept after you one day or night in your loneliest solitude and said to you; 'This life, as you live it now and have lived it, you will have to live again and again, times without number;... Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who thus spoke? Or have you experienced a tremendous moment in which you would have answered him: 'You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine!'... How well disposed towards yourself and towards life would you have to become to have *no greater desire* than for this ultimate eternal sanction and seal?

This disposition towards oneself and one's life is what bears a hint of the state of *anurāga*, for it is powerful enough to make the eternal recurrence of the same into a joy and a blessing.

The juxtaposition of these two great insights from two very different traditions gives us a deeper understanding of each. Nietzsche's obscure thought of the eternal recurrence of the same bears a message of life-affirmation and a challenge to the power of man's will to improve his life, to turn it into something which he would want to have recur eternally. Heidegger quotes him once again;[65]

> We did create the heaviest thought—now let us create the being to whom it will be light and blissful... To celebrate the future and not the past. To write the mythos of the

63. U. n. 14. 146.
64. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Penguin Edition, Introduction, pp. 19-20.
65. Heidegger, p. 109.

> future! To live in hope! Blissful moments! And then to draw the curtain shut again, and turn *our thoughts* to firm and present purposes!

This thought requires a new being to bear it and a turning away from absorption in the past (the 'It was') to the present (being) and the future (the 'It shall be'). The great positivity and joyfulness of this passage is most striking, especially when contrasted to the gravity of what Nietzsche perceived to be the religiosity of his age and against which he so strongly reacted.

Certainly Nietzsche, had he known of Vaiṣṇavism, would have grouped it together with all other forms of 'world-rejecting' religious sects, and in doing so, he would have been justified from one point of view.

The Vaiṣṇavas instead of loving this world transfer their love to a separate world, the world of Vṛndāvana. Still, there is a positive and rich attitude towards life that pervades that world (Vṛndāvana) and spills over into this one. The *līlā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana is filed with life and love, filled with blissful moments of action and stillness. The world of Vṛndāvana is really this world transformed by the introduction of Kṛṣṇa who is the 'self of all.'[66] Kṛṣṇa functions as the center of focus in that world. He is both the self and not the self of the devotee. Action for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa when motivated by love is simultaneously a selfless giving and an affirmation of self. Thus, Vaiṣṇavism too is self-affirming and world-affirming in its own special way. The presence of the self in Vṛndāvana simultaneously infuses that world and this world with meaning, with a point towards which existence moves, ordinarily lacking in this world. A separate reality is chosen because the characteristics of this world are too well known; it is a world of extreme beauty and tyrannical temporality. In such a world the full possibilities of self have no chance for expression. Vṛndāvana, a world of consciousness is as 'present' to the experience of

66. *Bhāg.*, 10. 33. 36.

the meditating individual as this world of matter, yet there the self plays unrestricted by limitations of time-space.

Vaiṣṇavism, too, might be regarded as a reaction to previous traditions of 'gravity.' In the circumstances of medieval India, the two most powerful opposing traditions were the ritualistic, *smārta* tradition[67] and the monism, or rather, non-dualism of some Vedantic traditions. The first was full of rites to abolish the 'It was,' rites of atonement and appeasement. The second had what might be called suicidal tendencies, in that it sought to dissolve away the attributes of self and personality. Both traditions were, in their own ways, quite negative, the second more so than the first. Vaiṣṇavism perhaps shares with Nietzsche a rebellion against previous stagnant and negative traditions. In their negativity both traditions advocated self-denial, the first by making rigid, and giving divine sanction to, the structure of society at the time, i. e. the caste system. The second tradition supported self-denial by teaching that all appearances were illusory, i. e. *māyā*. By denying the reality of the world in this way, the reality of the personal self and of love was also denied. The non-dualists sought to transcend this world of names and forms and to realize the attributeless Brahman. Thus they too turned their backs on the world of diversity spread before them.

Vaiṣṇavism's reaction to these traditions was to turn away from the past and its 'It was,' i. e. caste, karma and past sins, and to spread a doctrine of equality and anticipation of the future. Anyone might become a *mañjarī* provided the *ruci* or taste for such a mode of love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is present. The Vaiṣṇavas also envisioned an ultimate realm which retained the variations and forms of this world. They did not and do not seek an attributeless absolute into which they may merge losing their individuality. Their absolute is the joyful exchange of love in an ideal pastoral world occupied by an enigmatic

67. *Smārta* comes from *smṛti*, i.e. those who follow the *smṛti* texts. The *smṛti* texts are secondary scriptures giving social laws and rites.

but extremely attractive person, Kṛṣṇa, and his perhaps even more enigmatic, selfless lover, Rādhā. All the richness of human character and human love are present in this sacred realm. The self and the life of that self is re-established at the center of the conception of the ultimate reality.

Nietzsche sought to make life itself its own object; an idea shared by many today. To do so, however, he appealed to this thought of the eternal recurrence of the same, thus grounding life in yet another metaphysical truth. Heidegger calls this thought the 'last thought of Western metaphysics.' Heidegger admits, however, that, as a thought, it remains extremely obscure and he offers no real insight into what Nietzsche might have meant by this thought. He only exhorts us not to avoid this last great thought by various subterfuges (that it is as 'old as the hills' or some sort of mysticism). What sort of thought is this thought of the eternal recurrence of the same? It is not a thought that reveals a strictly rational origin. Nietzsche never really demonstrates his thought in an ordered, logical fashion. In this case, Nietzsche's thought may be better called a 'vision' of reality rather than a reasoned conclusion about reality. It might be classed among those thoughts called by some 'mythopoeic,' which gives rise to mythology or poetry rather than logic.[68] Thus its obscurity is pregnant with a thousand possible meanings and a richness which defies an exhaustive analysis.

Conclusion

The Vaiṣṇava's share with Nietzsche his thought of the eternal recurrence of the same. They, however, have developed it into a more definite form by focusing on one of its poetic possibilities. Faced with a world which appears as anything but a recurrence of the same, they have sought that recurrence in a sacred realm, a 'separate' reality. The eternal recurrence of the same has been peopled with beings in love for whom

68. Henri Frankfort, *The Intellectual Life of Ancient Man.*

the eternal recurrence, because of that intense love, has become the greatest source and assurance of joy. They have willed themselves into that reality because they have discovered that deep within themselves they love. Because of their love they were capable of willing the eternal recurrence of the same. Thus, the Vaiṣṇavas have brought to light a level deeper than that of will in their archeology of being. They have discovered the level of love which gives will its impulse, guidance and strength. This, as shown earlier, was implicit in the writings of Nietzsche in the form of being 'well-disposed.' If in Western philosophy the proposition 'willing is primal being' is the highest understanding of being, in India another understanding of being, perhaps more primordial, has been discovered. Its proposition would be, 'loving is primal being.'

SACRED RAPTURE: THE BHAKTI-RASA THEORY OF RŪPA GOSVĀMIN

NITĀI DĀS

Few conceptions are as difficult to understand in the religious universe of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Vaiṣṇavism as *bhakti-rasa*. One might correctly claim, however, that the *bhakti-rasa* experience is the 'fountain of life' from which the movement started by Śrī Caitanya five hundred years ago has repeatedly rejuvenated itself. Śrī Caitanya himself tasted *bhakti-rasa*, as all of his biographers attest, and brought his associates into the ken of that experience as well. *Bhakti-rasa* constituted Mahāprabhu's primary religious experience. Moreover, the cultivation of *bhakti-rasa* has immeasurably enriched the Vaiṣṇava tradition through encouraging the composition of numerous works of poetry, plays, songs, proto-novels, etc.[1] The quest for *bhakti-rasa* is *the* quest of the follower of Śrī Caitanya, which leads him into the world of Vaiṣṇava association, practice and ritual, and which gives him the strength to overcome the distractions and allurements presented by an undisciplined mind in a chaotic world. Finally, *bhakti-rasa* delivers him into the realm of his aspirations, the eternal Vṛndāvana where Kṛṣṇa himself is engaged in enjoying *rasa* with his eternal associates. As a measure of the importance of *rasa* in Caitanya's Vaiṣṇavism, it may be noted that it is *rasa* which, in effect, establishes Kṛṣṇa as the tradition's major object of worship. The chief *rasa* theorist of the tradition, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin, confirms this in his monumental *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. He says;

> Though from the point of view of philosophy (theology or dogma), the Lord of Śrī (Nārāyaṇa) and Kṛṣṇa are non-different. *Rasa*, reveals the form of Kṛṣṇa to be the most excellent. This is the position of *rasa*.[2]

It is impossible within the limits of a short essay to give a full treatment of *bhakti-rasa*. *Rasa* is a vast and complex

1. By 'proto-novels' I have in mind compositions such as *campūs* like the *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū* by Kavi Karṇapūra and the *Gopāla-campū* by Jīva Gosvāmin. These are prose compositions in Sanskrit with occasional versification which tell a story.

2. B. r. s., 1. 2. 59.

topic the proper discussion of which would require nothing less than a full length book. Here only a brief description of the *bhakti-rasa* theory of Śrī Rūpa will be attempted along with an outline of its background in the earlier Sanskrit aesthetic traditions. In this endeavor, an attempt must be made to distinguish *bhakti-rasa* from the aesthetic *rasa* of Sanskrit poetics. The author hopes in this way to lay a foundation for further study of this important and interesting topic and to contribute by means of some of the concepts discussed here, towards phenomenology of religious feeling.

Rasa is a concept which cannot easily be translated into English. Nevertheless, various scholars have characterized it as 'aesthetic-experience, -pleasure, -rapture, -relish, -sentiment, etc.' All of these terms capture some aspect of the conception of *rasa* but none of them cover all of its facets. Rather than try to find an equivalent for *rasa* in English or to attempt a definition of the concept at the outset, it is best to allow its various facets emerge in the course of the description that follows.

Speculation on *rasa* dates back to very early times in India. The *Upaniṣads* (6th-2nd century B. C.) abound with the term. The famous passage from the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad; raso vai saḥ, rasaṁ hyevāyaṁ labdhvānandī bhavati*,[3] is often quoted as a Vedic authority for the *rasa* experience.[4] The *rasa* referred to in this passage, however, is certainly not the technical *rasa* of the much later aestheticians. Yet, the later concept of *rasa* owes something to this early idea, for the *rasa* in the Upaniṣadic passage means joy (*ānanda*) and joy or pleasure is one of the major components of the concept of aesthetic *rasa*. Aesthetic speculations on *rasa* attempted to discover why art, specifically poetry and drama, causes pleasure in men of taste.

The earliest technical usage of the word is found in Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* (4th or 5th century A. D.). The discus-

3. "He indeed is *rasa*. This one obtaining *rasa* becomes joyful."
4. Jagannātha Paṇḍita, *Rasa-gaṅgādhara*, p. 58.

sion as it is found in the pages of Bharata reveals the concept already fairly advanced and all of the major terminology of the theory already developed. Thus the theory must have been evolving for some time before the composition of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*. Bharata's discussion of *rasa* occupies the sixth chapter of his work and his discussion of *bhāva*, or emotion, the seventh. These two chapters of Bharata's text are partly augmented by the masterful commentary of Abhinavagupta (10th century A. D.). These texts provide the materials for a study of the early history of the *rasa* theory. Abhinavagupta, in addition, may be credited with giving the *rasa* theory its classical formulation, a formulation which for the most part, stood up through the time of the last great aesthetic theorist, Jagannātha Paṇḍita (17th century A. D.).

What then does Bharata say about *rasa?* Bharata first of all establishes the great importance of *rasa* with his statement; *na hi rasād ṛte kaścid arthaḥ pravartate*, "Without *rasa* no meaning prevails."[5] In this way Bharata justifies taking up *rasa* first among all of the various topics of dramaturgy. His next statement is the famous *rasa-sūtra* which is the kernel of the *rasa* theory and which sparked off numerous commentarial debates over the following centuries. The *rasa sūtra* is; *vibhāvānubhāva-vyabhicāri-saṁyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ*, "Rasa is produced from the union of the *vibhāvas, anubhāvas* and *vyabhicārīs.*"[6] Abhinavagupta's long commentary on this *sūtra* introduces us to the history of the debate over the meaning of this *sūtra*. He concludes after astutely critiquing his predecessors' theories with his own theory which includes the best parts of the earlier discussions.

In the simplest terms, when, in a play or poem, a young man and young woman are depicted in a romantic setting such as a moonlit garden (*vibhāvas*), when they caste furtive glances at each other and tremble on touching each other (*anubhāvas*)

5. N. s., Chapter Six, p. 271.
6. *Ibid.*

and when other fleeting emotions such as shyness, euphoria or jealousy (*vyabhicārīs*) are portrayed in them, discerning members of the audience become aware of the existence of love (*rati*). The pleasure produced in a sympathizing (*sahṛdaya*) member of the audience when all of these elements are in conjunction is called *rasa*, in this case *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, the erotic sentiment. This, in its lowest common denominator form, is the *rasa* theory. Needless to say, the theory raised a number of questions and posed a series of problems the details of which, though extremely interesting, need not occupy us here.

Though the *sūtra* uses the word *niṣpatti* (production) to characterize the origin of *rasa*, Abhinavagupta argues that *rasa* is not produced but manifested (*abhivyakta*) when the *vibhāvas*, *auubhāvas* and *vyabhicārīs* are perceived in conjunction by the sympathetic aesthete. The *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicārīs* form the content of a play or poem. In everyday life they are the causes, the effects and the companion emotions of a handful of dominant emotions called *sthāyibhāvas* or lasting emotions. When, however, these are portrayed in the unreal world of drama or poetry, they act to manifest *rasa*, and because of this action and their unreal nature they are distinguished from their everyday counterparts by the technical terms *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicārī*. The unreal world of art short circuits the ordinary process of the arousal of emotions in the discerning man of taste and, instead, awakens subtle mental impressions (*vāsanās*) created by previous emotional experiences which lie dormant within his mind. Simultaneous with this bringing into consciousness of old *vāsanās* is a relaxation of self-identity which takes place in the aesthete while experiencing art. He sees before him an actor in a play, say, whose acting and costume presents the illusion that he is the character the play is about. The awarenesses, 'this is an actor' and 'this is Rāma (the character of the play),' arise simultaneously in the mind of the viewer of a play. The awareness, 'this is an actor,' represents the time and place of the aesthete sitting in the theater watching the play. The awareness, 'this is Rāma,'

represents the time and place presented in the play. These two contradictory awarenesses under certain circumstances cancel each other while the *vibhāvas,* etc., represented in the play awaken the past impression of a dominant emotion.

Thus the aesthete, freed from his own limited identity, experiences a generalized form of the dominant emotion, i. e. an emotion not tied to either the present nor to the time represented in the play and not localized in any limited person. What remains after the aesthete's liberation from his circumstances is his consciousness (*saṁvit*) colored by the emotional *vāsanā* which was brought into experience by the *vibhāvas, anubhāvas* and *vyabhicārīs.* This, for Abhinavagupta, is *rasa.*[7]

Rasa, therefore, cannot be said to be 'created' or 'produced' because its elements, consciouness and the dormant *vāsanās* are already in existence. The process of aesthetic contemplation described above merely uncovers or manifests them. Furthermore, *rasa* is always a pleasurable experience because inherent in this consciousness, freed from all objects and adjuncts, with the exception of the tinge of generalized emotion, is joy (*ānanda*).

One other technical term remains to be discussed. This is the term *sthāyibhāva. Sthāyibhāva*, which has been translated as the dominant or lasting emotion, is a term introduced to distinguish the major or primary emotion in a work of art from everyday emotions (called simply *bhāvas*) as in the case of *vibhāvas*. etc. *Sthāyibhāvas* are distinguished from the *vyabhicārīs*, because they are more enduring, of greater depth and power than the *vyabhicārīs.* Thus, in one place Bharata compares the *sthāyīs* with kings and the *vyabhicārīs* with the followers of kings.[8] Though both are emotions, the *sthāyīs* carry more weight. *Sthāyibhāvas,* however, are not mentioned in the *rasa-sūtra* and this has been one of the points of discussion among the commentators. What is the relationship between the *sthāyīs* and the *rasas?* There are eight *sthāyibhāvas;*

7. Abhinavagupta, *Abhinava-bhāratī*, pp. 282-3; *Kāvyāloka-locana* on the *Dhvanyāloka*, p. 14.

8. N. s., pp. 343-4.

rati (love), *hāsa* (laughter), *śoka* (sadness), *krodha* (anger), *utsāha* (courage,) *bhaya* (fear) *jugupsā* (disgust) and *vismaya* (wonder).[9] These correspond to the eight *rasas: śṛṅgāra* (eros), *hāsya* (comedy), *karuṇa* (compassion), *raudra* (fury), *vīra* (heroism), *bhayānaka* (horror), *bībhatsa* (revulsion) and *adbhuta* (astonishment). To these Abhinavagupta adds the *rasa śānta* (tranquillity) which relates to the *sthāyī nirveda* (indifference) produced by knowledge of the Truth.[10] Thus, a correlation exists between the *sthāyīs* and the *rasas.* Yet, because special effort has been made to give the *rasas* different names, it must be concluded that the *rasas* are different from the *sthāyīs.*

Bharata himself says in several places that the *sthāyī* becomes *rasa* when it is brought to experience or is tasted through the various *bhāvas*, i. e. the *vibhāvas*, etc.[11] The example he gives is the production and enjoyment of a flavor when many ingredients, herbs and substances are combined.[12] Nevertheless, the *sthāyīs* are not mentioned in the *rasa-sūtra* as part of the combination which produces or manifests *rasa.*

Abhinavagupta seems to say that it is not the *sthāyī* which becomes *rasa.* He does not seem to distinguish between the *sthāyibhāvas* and ordinary emotions (*bhāvas*). As a result the mere tasting of the *sthāyīs* cannot be a source of pleasure because four of the eight or nine *sthāyīs*, i. e. anger, fear, disgust and sadness are not pleasant experiences. The experiencing of those *sthāyīs* cannot account for the experience of pleasure in art. Thus, Abhinavagupta in an important passage of his commentary on Bharata appears to distinguish *rasa* from the *sthāyī.*[13] In another place, he says that the *sthāyī* which is generalized (*sādhāraṇībhūta*) and brought within the experi-

9. *Ibid.*, 6. 17, p. 267.
10. *Abhinava-bhāratī*, p. 267.
11. N. s., pp. 286, 288, 343-4.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 285.
13. *Abhinava-bhāratī*, p. 282. I say 'appears' here because the reading which is *sthāyi-vilakṣaṇa eva rasaḥ* contains a suggested reading,

ence of a long-lasting or single consciousness is *rasa*.[14] In either case, the *sthāyī*, taken as an ordinary day-to-day emotional experience, is barred from becoming *rasa*. Considering the different meanings in which Bharata and Abhinavagupta use the word *sthāyibhāva*, perhaps the difference between them is not so great. Abhinavagupta uses it to refer to everyday emotions and thus must sharply distinguish it from *rasa* which is non-worldly (*alaukika*) and always pleasurable. Bharata limits the use of the word *bhāva* to the world of art and thereby already distinguishes the *sthāyibhāva* from ordinary emotions.[15]

Because of this uncertainty about the relationship of the *sthāyī* to *rasa*, some disagreement has arisen among the commentators as to who experiences *rasa*. Since Bharata distinguishes between the world of everyday life and the world of the theater, *rasa* is the experience of the man of taste or the aesthete (*sahṛdaya*) who views a play or hears a poem. A verse cited in his text supports this view;[16]

> The wise taste with their minds the *sthāyibhāvas* which are formed through the enactment of the *bhāvas* (i. e., the *vibhāvas*, etc.). These are called dramatic *rasas*.

From this statement two ideas may be gathered. One arises from the use of the word *āsvādayanti*, 'they taste.' This usage implies a mode of experience of emotion quite different from the way we ordinarily experience emotion. It implies a pleasurable experience. The second idea is that the *sthāyī* is of a different order than ordinary emotion because it is formed (*sambaddha*) by acting and not by real incidents. Thus, emotions 'formed' in this way are different from ordinary emotions. A distinction is implied in this verse between the world of art

given by the editor, of *sthāyi-lakṣaṇa eva rasaḥ*. The basis for this amendment is unknown. Since, immediately following this passage, Abhinava contradicts Śrī Śaṅkuka and others who say, *sthāyy eva vibhāva-pratyāyyo rasyamāṇatvād rasa ucyate*, the reading *vilakṣaṇa* (different) seems correct here.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 283.
15. N. s., 7. 1-3, p. 340.
16. *Ibid.*, 6. 32-3, p. 288.

and that of life. A confusion, however, is introduced into the conception by the example of the enjoyment of food. Food has only one sphere, that of life. One enjoys food directly, not indirectly, that is, by watching others eat. The implication of this example is that there is no difference between the *rasa* and the *sthāyī*. Therefore, some of the commentators such as Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa say that *rasa* primarily occurs in the characters of the play such as Rāma and Sītā, and is only secondarily enjoyed by the audience. For Bharata and certainly for Abhinavagupta, *rasa* is only available through art and to the man of taste. The original subjects of a play were part of the ordinary world and thus experienced *bhāva* and not *rasa*.

This is the aesthetic discussion of *rasa* which forms the background on which Rūpa's theory must be viewed. The discussions and conclusions of Abhinavagupta were later systematized by Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa (12th century) in his monumental *Kāvya-prakāśa* which became one of the standard texts of poetics.[17] This text was carried to various parts of India and became the object of numerous commentaries. One other later work should be mentioned which gained a high degree of popularity and which gives a full treament of *rasa*. This is the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* of Viśvanātha (14th century). This text deals with both poetics and drama and was widely used in Eastern India. Its author lived in Orissa. Rūpa Gosvāmin was familiar with this text and once referred to it disparagingly in the beginning of his work on dramaturgy, the *Nāṭaka-candrikā*.[18]

Both the texts, the *Kāvya-prakāśa* and the *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, were primarily influenced by Abhinavagupta and the expounder of the *dhvani* (suggestion) theory of poetry, Ānandavardhana, the author of the *Dhvanyāloka*. The texts formed what might be called a tradition of reflection on *rasa*, and, since Abhina-

17. Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa's representation of the views of some of the commentators on Bharata differs, sometimes substantially, from those same views as given by Abhinavagupta. Such is the case of Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa's viewpoint, for instance.

18. N. c., verse 2, p. 1.

-vagupta, Ānandavardhana and Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa were all Kāśmīrīs, this tradition may be referred to as the Kāśmīrī or Northern tradition of aesthetics. Though this tradition was, or rather became, the predominant tradition, it was by no means the only aesthetic school of thought. At least one other tradition existed which may be called the Southern tradition because most of its writers were from South India. The main exponent of this Southern tradition was King Bhoja of Dhārā. Since, as we shall see later, the *rasa* concept of Rūpa Gosvāmin differs in significant ways from that of Abhinavagupta and his *rasa* tradition, it is worth taking a brief look at the interesting *rasa* speculations of Bhojarāja.

King Bhoja was an extremely learned and prolific king who lived in Mālvā in the eleventh century. Though he wrote many works, including a commentary on the *Yoga-sūtra* of Patañjali, his writings on aesthetics are contained in two, the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* and the *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa*. The first is a massive text in prose and verse consisting of thirty-six chapters. The second, which is probably his earlier work, is much shorter and is mostly in verse. The eleventh chapter of the *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* and the fifth chapter of the *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa* contain his discussion of *rasa*. Bhoja's theory of *rasa* is unique in that he disagrees with the rest of the traditions by insisting that there is only one *rasa* and that *rasa* is *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, the erotic sentiment. All other *rasas* issue out of *śṛṅgāra* and ultimately culminate in *śṛṅgāra*. Bhoja argues in his *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa* that *rasa* and *prema* (love) are one and the same. Anyone who loves a particular kind of activity will excell in that activity and experience *rasa* with respect to it.[19] One who, on the other hand, is incapable of loving cannot experience *rasa* in any activity. Thus love or *prema* is essential for the experience of *rasa*, or more appropriately, love is *rasa*. This capacity to love is given three names: *śṛṅgāra* (eros), *abhimāna* (pride) and *ahaṅkāra* (a sense of self). The *bhāvas*

19. Ś. p., vol. 2, p. 429.

(the *vibhāvas, anubhāvas, vyabhicārīs* and the *sthāyibhāvas*) are born out of *śṛṅgāra* and are the causes of the development and rise to excellence of *śṛṅgāra.*

Without going into the complexities of Bhoja's *rasa* theory, a few of its salient features should be mentioned. In the first place, Bhoja apparently felt that *rasa* may be experienced by the *nāyaka*, that is the characters on whose story a play or poem is based. He also felt that the capacity to experience *rasa* was not shared by all but was the result of the presence of an *adṛṣṭa* (the unseen results of past lives) which is uncommon and which is the result of *dharma* or religious piety or practice.[20] Another idea of his which is of interest is his conception of the three points or stages of *rasa* development. The first stage of *rasa* is its existence as the matured self-consciousness (*ahaṅkāra*) in the mind of the man of taste. The second stage is the manifestation of all the *bhāvas* out of the *ahaṅkāra* and the rise of the *ahaṅkāra* to its greatest excellence through those *bhāvas*. The final stage is the transformation of the *rati sthāyibhāva* into *prema*, which is *rasa*, as a result of its reaching its fullest maturity, and by connection with this transformation of *rati* into *prema* the other *bhāvas* are also transformed into *rasa*.[21] To repeat, *śṛṅgāra* alone exists at first in the form of the developed self-consciousness. Out of this consciousness arise all of the forty-nine *bhāvas*. These *bhāvas* reach their highest excellence as a result of association with *rati* transformed into *prema* and thus themselves transform (*pariṇati*) into *rasa*. As we shall see later, these ideas of Bhoja's may have had a strong influence on the *rasa* conception of Rūpa Gosvāmin.[22]

It is now time to examine Rūpa Gosvāmin's theory of *rasa*, or rather *bhakti-rasa*, in some detail. Rūpa's statements

20. *Ibid.*, p. 431.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 436 and 444.
22. This primarily occurred through the work of Siṁhabhūpāla called the *Rasārṇava-sudhākara*. Siṁhabhūpāla was a mid-fourteenth century king of Rachakonda in Andhra Pradesh and a member of the *rasa* tradition of Bhojarāja.

about *rasa* are scattered throughout his theoretical books. An effort will be made to collect these propositions and put them in a logical order. Let us begin with Rūpa's characterization of *bhakti rasa* itself. What is *bhakti-rasa*? Rūpa describes *bhakti-rasa* in several places in his works as an astonishment (*camatkāra*) aroused by or accompanied by intense delight (*prauḍhānanda*).[23] In this characterization, the importance given to astonishment reveals Rūpa's indebtedness to Viśvanātha's formulation of *rasa*. Viśvanātha in his *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* says that *rasa* is 'an unbroken, self-manifesting consciousness of delight whose essence is an otherworldly astonishment.'[24] Viśvanātha wrote on what Rūpa considered to be mundane *rasa*, however. For Rūpa, only *bhakti-rasa* is supermundane or spiritual.[25] The *sthāyibhāva* of *bhakti-rasa* is *kṛṣṇa-rati*, love for Kṛṣṇa, which because of its connection with Kṛṣṇa is sacred or supernatural (*alaukika*) from the start. In this, Rūpa has radically differed from all the previous *rasa* traditions. The standard opinion of these traditions is that *rati* or love which is directed at anyone besides a woman cannot become *rasa* but remains only a *bhāva*.[26] Thus, *kṛṣṇa-rati* according to this opinion, being love for a god, can not be the foundation for a *rasa*. For them, *bhakti-rasa* is a mistaken notion.

Actually, Rūpa was not the first, however, nor the last, to speak of *bhakti-rasa*.[27] The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* hints at such an idea, though a fully developed idea of *rasa* is not explicitly discussed in the text.[28] An idea of *bhakti-rasa*, however, is developed out of the *Purāṇa* by Vopadeva (13th century) in his work the *Muktāphala*. Vopadeva says that there are nine types of *bhaktas* because there are nine types of *bhakti-rasa*.[29] These

23. B. r. s., 2. 1. 10 and 2. 5. 81. See also; 2. 5. 104, 110, 123, 132.
24. S. d., p. 85.
25. U. n., 1. 21, 5. 2; B. r. s., 2. 5. 107-8.
26. K. p., 4. 35, p. 62.
27. After Rūpa Gosvāmin, the great Advaita Vedāntin Madhusūdana Sarasvatī wrote his *Bhakti-rasāyaṇa*.
28. *Bhāg*., 1. 1. 3.
29. M. p., p. 164.

nine types of *bhakti-rasa* correspond to the standard nine *rasas* discussed in the Sanskrit aesthetic traditions (*śānta*, tranquillity, is included). He, however, defines *bhakti-rasa* as 'the astonishment produced by the hearing (or reading) of the activities of Viṣṇu or his devotees as described by Vyāsa and others.'[30] This definition contains several of the seeds of Rūpa's *bhakti-rasa*. The *vibhāvas* of Rūpa's theory, Viṣṇu and his devotee, are present, as well as the importance of hearing (*śravaṇa*) literary descriptions of the Lord's activities and finally the idea of astonishment (*camatkāra*); these all become parts of Rūpa's later conception of *rasa*.

Rūpa differs considerably from Vopadeva, however, and this is primarily in his concept of the *sthāyibhāva* of *bhakti-rasa*. Since Rūpa places a great deal of importance on the *sthāyibhāva*, i. e. *kṛṣṇa-rati*, it is appropriate to start with a discussion of Rūpa's idea of the *sthāyī* One could justifiably say that the *sthāyī* is the cornerstone of Rūpa's *rasa* theory. While Vopadeva recognized the traditional nine *sthāyibhāvas*, Rūpa recognizes only one of them, *rati* (love). Seven of the others he relegates to a secondary position. They only become *bhakti-rasa* when assisted by, or associated with, the primary *sthāyī*, *kṛṣṇa-rati*.[31] *Śānta*, the ninth *rasa*, becomes absorbed into Rūpa's conception of *kṛṣṇa-rati* as a state of transition during which one becomes indifferent to the attractions of the world and experiences a mild but non-specific attraction to Kṛṣṇa.[32] This indifference towards the world is a component of all the other forms of *kṛṣṇa-rati*.

The concept of *rati* (love) in classical aesthetics, therefore, became the primary *sthāyibhāva* for Rūpa. This *rati* exists in two stages of manifestation. The first stage is called *bhāva* and the fully matured stage is called *prema*. Rūpa defines *bhāva* as;[33]

30. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
31. B. r. s., 2. 5. 42-44.
32. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 8-21.
33. *Ibid.*, 1. 3. 1.

> *Bhāva* is a particular form of pure being (*śuddha-sattva*) which is like a beam of the sun of *prema*. Its rays soften the heart (*citta*).

The image here is that of the rising sun. Before the sun itself rises, its first rays appear on the horizon. *Prema* is compared with the sun and its first ray is *bhāva*. The action of the rays or effulgence of that first sun-beam is a softening of the heart. Rūpa supports his statement by citing a verse from an unknown *Tantra* which says that the *bhāva* is the first stage of *prema*. Later, he equates *bhāva* with *rati* on the basis of their equation in both the *Purāṇas* and the *Nāṭya-śāstra* of Bharata.[34] This idea of *bhāva* as the first stage of the appearance of emotion was an idea already current in the older aesthetic texts. It occurs mostly in the context of the analysis of various *anubhāvas* (those which arise in the heart, *citta*, or mind, *manas*) of women falling in love. Rūpa, in his *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, quotes a previous authority (whom he does not name but who appears to be Śāradātanaya, the author of the *Bhāva-prakāśana*) who says;

> The motionlessness of the mind when there is cause for its disturbance is called *sattva* or being. The first fluctuation in it, like the first change in a seed (as it starts to sprout), is called *bhāva*.[35]

Rūpa's application of this concept of *bhāva*, which indicates the first appearance of emotion in the mind, to the context of the first manifestation of *kṛṣṇa-rati* seems an apt one.

Rūpa proceeds to develop his doctrine of *bhāva* or *rati* along unusual lines. He draws a sharp line between his *kṛṣṇa-rati* and all other forms of *rati* or *sthāyibhāva*. Rūpa says in two verses;[36]

> This *rati*, however, appears among the functions of the mind and becomes one of them. Though it is self-manifesting, it appears as if manifested and though it actually is

34. *Ibid.*, 1. 3. 13.
35. U. n., 11. 7. See *Bhāva-prakāśana*, p. 11 and *Rasārṇava-sudhākara*, p. 80.
36. B. r. s., 1. 3. 4-5.

gustation itself, it becomes the cause for a gustation whose objects are Kṛṣṇa, etc.

In this unusual characterization of the *sthāyibhāva* called *kṛṣṇa-rati*, Rūpa claims for it a supernatural origin. It does not exist as one of the 'natural' emotions or faculties of the mind. It 'appears' in the mind and assumes a mental nature, but from its inception it is transcendent or otherworldly (*alaukika*). Furthermore, although it is self-manifesting, it appears as if manifested. By this claim, Rūpa is denying the relationship of cause and effect in manifesting this *rati*, and certainly, as one of his commentators, Mukunda Dāsa Gosvāmin, points out, poetry or drama is not a cause of its manifestation. Lastly, Rūpa says that it is gustation or relish itself but acts as the cause for the enjoyment of Kṛṣṇa, his *bhaktas*, etc. Here we are presented with two inexplicable contradictions by which Rūpa wishes to establish the inconceivable nature of this *rati*. From another angle, Rūpa, by this characterization, collapses the distinction between *rati*, i. e. the *sthāyibhāva*, and *rasa*. The *sthāyibhāva* is *rasa* in the case of *bhakti rasa*. The *sthāyibhāva* is *rasa* when it is not being experienced and *rasa* is the *sthāyibhāva* when it is being experienced. One of the other outcomes of Rūpa's description of *kṛṣṇa-rati* is that the ability to experience *bhakti-rasa* is sharply distinguished from the ability to experience *rasa* in general; the religious experience is distinguished from the aesthetic experience.

This *kṛṣṇa-rati* is the primary *sthāyibhāva*. It is, according to Rūpa, of two varieties; self-promoting (*svārtha*) and other-promoting (*parārtha*).[37] The self-promoting *rati* nourishes itself through other *bhāvas* which are not opposed to it and diminishes *bhāvas* which are opposed. The other-promoting *rati* contracts itself and gives scope to other *bhāvas* whether they are opposed or not.[38] This *rati* which promotes other *bhāvas* is what gives rise to what Rūpa calls the secondary

37. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 2-3.
38. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 4-5.

(*gauṇa*) *kṛṣṇa-rati*. When this other-promoting *kṛṣṇa-rati* is joined with one of the seven traditional *sthāyibhāvas* (that is, all those besides *rati*) it contracts itself and accepts or nourishes the other *bhāva*. This combination then becomes called secondary (*gauṇa*) *kṛṣṇa-rati*.[39] Because these other *bhāvas* are joined with *kṛṣṇa-rati*, though in a contracted state, they are all also called *rati*.[40] Thus they are given the names *hāsa-rati*, *vismaya-rati*, etc. In all of them there is a component of *kṛṣṇa-rati*. This interesting conception probably has its source in Bhoja's *rasa* speculations. According to him, *rati* is a component of *kṛṣṇa-rati*. This interesting conception probably has its source in Bhoja's *rasa* speculations. According to him, *rati* is a component in all the *rasas*. The other *bhāvas* are composed of *rati*, which when transformed into *prema*, turns them into *rasa*.[41]

Primary *kṛṣṇa-rati* of the self-promoting variety is the main *sthāyibhāva* of *bhakti-rasa*. It is of five types; pure, affection, friendship, parental love and amorous love. Rūpa says that this *rati* becomes variegated because of the variety of people in which it appears, just as the sun has different reflections in different substances such as crystal, etc.[42] Rūpa has expanded the concept of *rati* into these five forms. Pure *rati* is the *śama* of the classical aestheticians which according to some is the *sthāyī* for *śānta-rasa*. *Śama* is a freedom from change or alternative in the mind. *Śānti-rati* is love for Kṛṣṇa as the superself of all beings. Affection is love mixed with respect such as a servant might have for a kind master. Friendship is the love for a friend such as takes place between equals. Parental love is the love of the parents or guardians for a child, and amorous love is the erotic love of members of the opposite sex for each other. This last *rati* is the traditional *rati* which is the *sthāyī* of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, the erotic sentiment.

39. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 39.
40. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 42.
41. Ś. p., p. 436.
42. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 6-7.

All of these distinctions in *bhāva* are also operative in *prema* which is the fully developed form of *bhāva*. Rūpa says;[43]

> When *bhāva* completely softens the heart and becomes distinguished by a high degree of possessiveness, it is called *prema*. *Prema* (with respect to *bhāva*) is much intensified.

Prema has a number of different forms or expansions of increased intensity. Rūpa does not discuss these forms in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* because they are quite uncommon among the practitioners of *bhakti*. In his *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, however, in the context of *madhura-rati*, amorous love, he gives a list of these other forms of *prema* in a hierarchical order;[44]

> When *rati* becomes firm it turns into *prema*; then gradually it becomes *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and finally *bhāva*.

To illustrate the relationship of all these forms of *prema* to one another Rūpa says;[45]

> Just as the seed becomes the sugar-cane plant and that (becomes) juice (*rasa*) and that (becomes) solidified molasses and that brown sugar crystals and that sugar and that powdered sugar and that rock candy, so it is with the six moods which are forms of *prema*, i. e. *sneha*, etc. These, however, the wise generally call (simply) *prema*.

Ideas of condensation, solidification and intensification are conveyed by this example. The highest form of *prema*, called *bhāva*, should not be confused with what has been called *bhāva* previously, i. e. the first appearance of *rati*. This new *bhāva* is the highest manifestation of *prema*. These distinctions might seem merely scholastic but Rūpa succeeds in associating each stage with a specific set of characteristics which represent acute observations on the nature of amorous love. The highest form of *prema* is called *mahābhāva* and is present only in Rādhā. From the practical point of view there is an important distinc-

43. *Ibid.*, 1. 4. 1.
44. U. n., 14. 60.
45. *Ibid.*, 14. 55.

tion between *bhāva* (the first appearance of *rati*) and *prema* which Rūpa indicates in a couple of places in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu.*[46] *Rati* as *bhāva* is dependent on the full expression of the *vibhāvas*, etc. in order to become *rasa*. *Prema*, however, becomes *rasa* even after a slight hearing of such expressions. This indicates that *prema* as a more developed form of *bhāva* is independent of the usual process of *rasa* realization. This is the consequence of the doctrine, mentioned earlier, that *rasa* is not caused by literature in the case of *kṛṣṇa-rati*.

Kṛṣṇa-rati in its two stages, *bhāva* and *prema*, is the *sthāyibhāva* of Rūpa's *bhakti-rasa*. How does *bhakti-rasa* arise, however? Rūpa says;[47]

> The *vibhāvas, anubhāvas, sāttvikas* and *vyabhicārīs* bring this *sthāyibhāva, kṛṣṇa-rati*, to the state of enjoyment in the hearts of devotees through the processes of hearing, etc. and it then becomes *bhakti-rasa*.

Once again Rūpa identifies *rasa* and the *sthāyibhāva*. *Rasa* is the *sthāyibhāva* when it is being enjoyed. The *sthāyibhāva*, however, did not occur in Bharata's *rasa-sūtra*; *vibhāvānubhāva-vyabhicārisaṁyogād rasa-niṣpattiḥ*. Rūpa differs from Bharata by adding the *sthāyibhāva* into his formula. He also includes in his characterization the locus of the experience of *rasa*, i. e. the heart of the *bhakta* (devotee). In Bharata's *rasa-sūtra* both the role of the *sthāyī* and the locus of the experience were unstated. These elisions sparked commentarial controversies on these issues with different commentators taking different sides. Rūpa takes a stand which apparently aligns him with the interpretation of Abhinavagupta. The location Rūpa specifies, however, the heart of the devotee, is broad enough to include the characters in a play and the audience as well, for Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa's main heroine, is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa just as much as the modern devotee sitting in an assembly listening to a reading of poetry about Kṛṣṇa.

46. B. r. s., 2. 1. 11 and 2. 5. 97.
47. *Ibid.*, 2. 1. 5.

Rūpa provides another, more detailed description of the *rasa* process;[48]

> *Rati*, though twofold, becomes *rasa* in the *bhaktas* by means of hearing of, comprehension of or remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, etc., which have become the *vibhāvas*, etc., just as substances like yoghurt, etc. through a particular combination with sugar, black pepper and so on becomes the flavor (*rasa*) called *rasāla*.

Here again *rati* becomes *rasa.* Rūpa in this verse, however, expands the process by adding remembrance (*smṛti*) to the means by which the *vibhāva*, etc. might be conveyed. This allows *rasa* to be experienced through meditation or in circumstances other than listening to poetry (hearing) or watching plays (comprehension through the acting of the actors). He also gives us a clear idea of what the *vibhāvas*, etc. are for *bhakti-rasa.* Kṛṣṇa and his *bhaktas* are the *vibhāvas.* Their activities resulting from their feelings of love for each other are the *anubhāvas*; their physical symptoms of intense feeling are the *sāttvikas* and other short term emotions which arise in the middle of the main emotion are the *vyabhicārīs.*

Rūpa gives an interesting example of the creation of *rasa* by comparing it to *rasāla*, a kind of sweet drink. *Kṛṣṇa-rati* corresponds to the yoghurt and other substances in the example. The *vibhāvas, anubhāvas, sāttvikas* and *vyabhicārīs* are the sugar, black pepper and so on. These must be combined according to a particular recipe. This corresponds to the hearing, comprehending and remembering of the *bhakti-rasa* process. The combination of all these ingredients according to the recipe produces a new substance, *rasāla* on the one hand and *rasa* on the other. Bharata gives a similar example relating to the enjoyment of food.[49] Both examples suggest the direct enjoyment of the *sthāyibhāva* 'spiced' by various other ingredients. With Bharata, however, it must be remembered that the

48. B. r. s., 2. 5. 79-80.
49. N. s., p. 288.

sthāyī is an illusion created by the play and the acting of the actors. Thus it can be enjoyed. Were the *sthāyī* actually aroused, the effect on the audience would be entirely different. They would experience actual fear, actual sadness, etc., experiences which are not pleasant. For Rūpa, however, the *sthāyī* itself, once it has made its first mysterious appearance in the heart of the devotee, is always present and the enjoyment of that *sthāyī*, which is itself a form of joy, is *bhakti-rasa*. He says;[50]

> *Rati* whose nature is joy exists in the heart of the *bhakta* and is brightened by the two cultivations (*saṁskāras*). It is brought to the state of *rasa* by the *vibhāvas*, etc., that is, Kṛṣṇa, etc., which have become objects of perception (*anubhava*) and thus it attains the highest limit of mature joy and astonishment.

In these verses, Rūpa raises the question of *saṁskāras* or, as translated here, cultivations. *Saṁskāras* are impressions left in the mind by previous or current experiences and practices. They tend to guide one's responses to and interpretations of events which occur in the present. Abhinavagupta bases the ability of a cultured connoiseur to experience *rasa* on the existence in his mind of *saṁskāras* created by previous experiences of the *sthāyibhāva*. Rūpa too attributes importance to the *saṁskāras* or *vāsanās*, as they are also called. Rūpa, in fact, says that in addition to the current cultivation one needs a cultivation from a previous life in order to experience *rasa*.[51] The *rati* alone is apparently not enough. Rūpa's nephew, Jīva Gosvāmin, in his commentary on this statement says that the presence of the previous cultivation strengthens or increases the *rati*.

Rūpa appears to follow Viśvanātha in requiring two *saṁskāras*. Viśvanātha also requires two cultivations, a present one and one surviving from the past. He reasons that if the present

50. B. r. s., 2. 1. 9-10.
51. *Ibid.*, 2. 1. 6.

cultivation were not required, then those who know nothing of *rati* at present would nevertheless experience *rasa*. On the other hand, if the past or old cultivation were not necessary then one would never find someone well conversant with *rati* yet incapable of experiencing *rasa*. One sees, however, that all of those who have no experience of *rati* in the present and some of those that do have such present experience do not realize *rasa*.[52] Rūpa may make the same assertion about *bhakti-rasa*. If both cultivations were not necessary then those who are not *bhaktas* in their present lives would experience *bhakti-rasa* while those who are *bhaktas* in their present lives would, in every case, experience it. Neither of these is consistent with experience, however. Therefore, two *saṁskāras* are needed.

So far we have been talking about how *rati* or *bhāva* (in Rūpa's terminology) becomes *rasa*. As mentioned before, Rūpa contrasts *rati* with *prema* which is the fully matured and intensified state of *rati*. He says;[53]

> But *prema* becomes immediately enjoyable even when it is lead to a minimum state of perception (*vibhāvanā*) by very minimal *vibhāvas*, etc.

Thus *prema* is distinguished from *rati*, apart from the qualities mentioned earlier, by a relative ease in its becoming *rasa* marked by less of a dependence on the full and well-articulated expression of the *vibhāvas*, etc. This independence of *rati* in its fully matured form has important repercussions which shall be discussed later.

Rūpa discusses the roles of each of the ingredients of *rasa* in bringing about the experience of *rasa*. A brief discussion of this subject will help make the process of *rasa* realization less mysterious. He begins with a general statement which establishes the names and gives examples of each;[54]

> The causes of *rati* such as *Kṛṣṇa*, his *bhakta*, the sound of his flute, etc., the effects of *rati* such as smiles, etc. as

52. *Sāhitya-darpaṇa*, p. 94.
53, B. r. s., 2. 1. 11.
54. *Ibid.*, 2. 1. 12-13.

> well as the eight (*sāttvika-vikāras*) such as stupefaction, etc., the assistants of *rati* such as indifference, etc. are known as the *vibhāvas, anubhāvas, sāttvikas* and the *vyabhicārīs*, respectively in the creation of *rasa*.

Here, as in Bharata, the names: *vibhāvas*, etc. are given to the causes, effects and assistants of the *sthāyibhāva*. In Bharata, this renaming is to distinguish them from their counterparts in the real world. Being represented in drama or poetry the causes, effects and assistants of emotion attain a different kind of reality, a reality based on illusion. For Rūpa, the distinction rests not on a distinction between the reality of life and the illusion of drama but on the distinction between the absence or presence of *kṛṣṇa-rati*. When *kṛṣṇa-rati* is present Kṛṣṇa and his *bhaktas* become *vibhāvas* and these *vibhāvas* bring about the enjoyment of the *sthāyī* which is known as *rasa*. After this general characterization, he expands on the roles of each of the ingredients of *rasa*. About the *vibhāvas* he says;[55]

> Because they create (*vibhāvayanti*) a suitability in *rati* for the various particular kinds of enjoyment, they are called *vibhāvas* by the wise.

Rūpa emphasizes the role of *vibhāvas* in making the *rati* capable of being tasted and, at the same time, in narrowing *rati* down to a particular one of its facets like servitude (*prīti*), friendship (*preyas*), etc. Thus the *vibhāvas* prepare *rati* for tasting and particularize it. Once *rati* is so prepared the *anubhāvas* begin their work;[56]

> Because they make *rati* known or spread the *rati* (made capable of enjoyment by the *vibhāvas*), abounding in enjoyment, to the mind, they, the sidelong glances and the physical transformations, are called *anubhāvas*.

Previously Rūpa defined the meaning of the term *vibhāva* as something which particularizes a general thing (*viśeṣena bhāvayati*). Here, he focuses on *anubhāva* as that which causes the

55. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 87.
56. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 88.

cognition of something (*anubhāvayati*). Thus the *anubhāvas* make the presence of the *rati* known.[57] The particularized *rati* brought now to the awareness of the characters and the audience is then completed through the action of the *vyabhicārīs*;[58]

> Those (emotions) such as indifference, etc. which set in motion or variegate *rati* developed in such a manner (i.e. particularized and cognized) are called the *sañcārīs* (*vyabhicārīs*).

Rūpa uses the word *sañcārī* from the root *saṁ-car* to define the role of the *vyabhicārīs*. The meaning of the root is 'to go or come together, to meet or join.' The *vyabhicārīs* join with the *sthāyī* to give it variety. The *sthāyī* is stationary and long lasting but the *vyabhicārīs* appear briefly, give a special flavor to the *sthāyī* and then disappear. Rūpa says in another place;[59]

> The *vyabhicārīs*, which are cognized through spoken language, gesture and physical symptoms, set the *bhāva* in motion. Thus they are also called *sañcārīs*. They rise out of and dissolve into the *sthāyī* which is like an ocean of nectar. Like waves, they increase it and then again become one with it.

The *vyabhicārīs*, therefore, add variety to the *sthāyī* by joining with it and, in some cases, temporarily predominating over it like a wave in the ocean. This temporary domination of the *sthāyī* is suggested by the causative use of the verb *saṁ-car* which means 'to cause to go or move.' As is often the case in perception, the characteristics of a particular emotion are better appreciated when they are juxtaposed with contrasting emotions. The simile of the ocean and its waves, however, suggests that the distinct emotions are rooted in or are aspects of the dominant *sthāyī*. Emotions which are fundamentally different from the *sthāyī* can not act as *vyabhicārīs* for that *sthāyī* because they weaken it rather than strengthen it.

57. *Ibid.*, 2. 2. 1, *cittastha-bhāvānām avabodhakāḥ*. 'They reveal the emotions situated in the mind.'

58. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 89.

59. *Ibid.*, 2. 4. 2-3.

Though each of these ingredients plays an undeniably important role in *rasa* realization, Rūpa insists on the central importance of the *sthāyī*. At one point in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* he cites the opinion of some opponent who holds that it is the influence of poetry or drama which causes Kṛṣṇa and his *bhaktas*, etc. to become *vibhāvas*, etc. and thus bring about the enjoyment of *rasa*.[60] That is to say, poetry and drama are the causes of the *bhakti-rasa* experience. This is a point of view which a representative of the classical *rasa* theory would hold. Rūpa, however, says no; it is the influence of *kṛṣṇa-rati* itself which is the cause of *rasa*. This *rati* itself is an astonishing treasure of sweetness about which it is difficult to reason.[61] Therefore, though the roles of the *vibhāvas*, etc. are important, their representation in poetry or plays is not the primary cause of *rasa*.

Rūpa demonstrates the power of *rati* itself as the cause of *rasa* realization by citing the case of those who are advanced in the development of *bhakti*, i. e. those who have *prema* rather than *rati*. They, even by slightly hearing about Hari (Kṛṣṇa), experience *rasa*.[62] If *bhakti-rasa* were dependent on the hearing of poetry and viewing of plays such a thing would not be possible, because then the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas*, *sāttvikas* and *vyabhicārīs* presented in poetry or drama must all be heard together in their entirety for *rasa* to be experienced. A full cognition of only some of them, or an unclear cognition of all of them is not sufficient for the manifestation of *rasa*. This is the position of the classical aesthetic tradition. Rūpa, however, admits the partial causality of poetry and drama, to some degree, in bringing about *rasa* for those whose *rati* is newly developed, i. e, for those on the level of *bhāva-bhakti*.[63] Nevertheless, the power or influence of *kṛṣṇa-rati* itself is the primary cause of *bhakti-rasa*, not poetry or drama.

60. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 90.
61. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 91.
62. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 97.
63. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 96,

Rūpa goes one step further in proclaiming the importance of the *sthāyī*, *kṛṣṇa-rati*. He says that it is the *rati* itself which makes Kṛṣṇa, etc. into *vibhāvas*, etc. In other words, *rati* causes the *vibhāvas*;[64]

> *Rati* makes Kṛṣṇa and the rest into *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and so on; and then, through them, when they have become *vibhāvas*, etc., expands itself.

He then gives an interesting example of this;[65]

> As the ocean fills the clouds with its own water and then through those very rains becomes filled with water again, (so it is with *rati*).

This example portrays the mutual causality of the *sthāyī* and the *vibhāvas*. The *sthāyī* creates the *vibhāvas* and in turn the *vibhāvas* nourish the *sthāyī* and bring it to the level of *rasa*. This conception invites comparison with the three *koṭis* or points of Bhojarāja. The first point or stage is called *ahaṅkāra-śṛṅgāra*, a highly developed sense of identity in the individual. Out of this state or quality of the self (*ātmā*) arises the *bhāvas*, etc. Here Bhoja includes the *sthāyibhāvas* as well. In this way he differs from Rūpa who has only the *vibhāvas*, etc. being caused by the *sthāyī*. The *sthāyī*, brought to its highest excellence by union with the *vibhāvas*, etc., passes beyond the state of contemplation (*bhāva*) and is transformed into *rasa*, or as Bhoja calls it, *prema*.[66] Bhoja too gives an interesting example which compares with that of Rūpa;[67]

> The forty-nine *bhāvas* headed by *rati*, etc. arise separately out of *śṛṅgāra*, the source of the various *bhāvas*. Surrounding it (*śṛṅgāra*) they expand it like the rays of light around a fire.

Thus, for Bhoja, the *bhāvas* come out of *rasa* and help to bring *rasa* to its highest excellence at which point it becomes enjoyed in the heart. Bhoja's *ahaṅkāra-śṛṅgāra* corresponds to Rūpa's

64. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 94.
65. *Ibid.*, 2. 5. 95.
66. Ś. p., p. 436.
67. *Ibid.*

kṛṣṇa-rati. Out of these come the *bhāvas*. These *bhāvas* bring about the *rasa*-hood of the *ahaṅkāra śṛṅgāra* or, in the case of Rūpa's theory, of *kṛṣṇa-rati*.

Rūpa, however, carries the process one step further by adding what might be called the '*rasa*-spiral.' He says;[68]

> *Rati* makes Kṛṣṇa, etc. (i. e. the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas*, etc.) into abodes of sweetness, etc. and they in turn, being experienced as such, cause *rati* to enlarge.

In other words, *kṛṣṇa-rati* makes Kṛṣṇa appear charming and, in turn, that charm makes *kṛṣṇa-rati* grow. This increased *rati* increases Kṛṣṇa's charm which in turn also increases the *rati*. Thus the process goes on increasing without any end. At the lower limit, however, we find an interesting version of the hermeneutic circle, i. e. one does not find Kṛṣṇa attractive without *rati* and yet Kṛṣṇa's attractiveness is a cause of *rati*.

Conclusion

In concluding, a few of the important distinctions between the *rasa* of classical Sanskrit aesthetics and Rūpa's *bhakti-rasa* should be reiterated. The first and most important point is that *bhakti-rasa* arises from a special *rati* which appears in the mind of the *bhakta*, the enjoyment of which constitutes the *bhakti-rasa* experience. This effectively distinguishes *bhakti-rasa* from *rasa* by limiting the *bhakti-rasa* experience to *bhaktas* who have this *rati*. On the other hand, the *rasa* of classical aesthetics is not denied. The experience of the non-*bhaktas*, however, is governed by the presence of the *vāsanās*, or impressions, in their minds of the other *sthāyīs* which are the bases of the classical *rasas*. Therefore, two people, one a *bhakta* and one a non-*bhakta*, hearing the same poem about Kṛṣṇa might both experience *rasa*, but the *rasa* would be different because they are based on different *sthāyīs*. For the *bhakta*, this *sthāyī* called *kṛṣṇa-rati* arises either as the result of a period of devotional practices (*sādhana*) or as the result of the mercy (*kṛpā*)

68. B. r. s., 2. 5. 98.

of Kṛṣṇa or his *bhakta*. For the non-*bhakta*, the *sthāyīs* are the result of past emotional experiences which have left impressions (*saṁskāras*) in their minds. The special *sthāyī* called *kṛṣṇa-rati* is the source of the supernatural nature of the *bhakti-rasa* experience. This *sthāyī* is from the very beginning supernatural. Rūpa describes it as *śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā* and *mahāśakti-vilāsātmā*, 'a particular form of purified being' and 'a form of the great power.'[69] Both of these characterizations proclaim *kṛṣṇa-rati's* transcendent nature in the peculiar language of this Vaiṣṇava school. If the *sthāyī* is supernatural its enjoyment, an event given the name *rasa*, is supernatural as well. In classical aesthetics, however, the *sthāyī* is not supernatural while *rasa* is considered to be so. This leap into transcendence depends on a number of conditions arising in the context of poetry or drama. The chief of these conditions is the generalization of the *sthāyī* by means of the conflict and final mutual negation of reality and illusion in the participation of the man of taste in poetry or drama.

It follows from this that classical *rasa* is dependent on representation in plays and poetry. The *bhakti-rasa*, however, is not dependent on plays or poetry. In advanced devotees even a slight hearing can bring about the enjoyment of *kṛṣṇa-rati*. *Kṛṣṇa-rati* by its very nature is enjoyable. Poetry may assist in bringing about the event of enjoyment, but this event may occur in other ways too. Rūpa gives three processes: *śruti*, hearing, *avagati*, comprehension, and *smṛti*, remembering. The first two refer to poetry and drama respectively; but the third can take place in the mind unassisted by the senses. In such a case, this refers to the form of visualization practice called *smaraṇa* which has gained prominence in the Vaiṣṇava tradition. Thus the *rasa* experience is extended to the context of meditation. If remembrance is sparked by external objects then we have the condition Caitanya experienced on his visit to Vṛndāvana and during his last years in Purī. Jīva Gosvāmin

69. *Ibid.*, 1. 3. 1 and 2. 5. 92.

mentions other contexts as well in which *rasa* might be experienced, though he does not list them.[70]

A further ramification of the special *alaukika* (transcendent) and enjoyable nature of *bhakti-rasa* is that it can be experienced by the characters (*anukārya*) about whom the plays and poetry are written, i.e. by Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa themselves and their *līlā* associates. The classical *rasa*, in contrast, is not only dependent on expression in poetry but can only be experienced by the members of the audience. The original characters on whose story a poem or a drama is based are limited, providing of course that they are not altogether imaginary, to the experience of *bhāva.* Thus Nala and Damayantī could only experience *rati-sthāyibhāva* while those who listen to their story dramatically presented can experience *rasa* from it. *Rasa* which arises only when generalization takes place, e.g. through plays or poetry, cannot be experienced by the subjects of a work of art unless they become members of the audience and participate as such in their own story. Neither can an actor experience *rasa* because he or she, being concentrated on the work of acting, must be fully aware of what he or she is doing. Thus only the audience is in a position to experience *rasa* Such is the position of classical aesthetics.

Rūpa as we have seen denies this in the case of *bhakti-rasa* and extends the *rasa* experience to the subjects of a play. For Rūpa, the *sthāyī* itself is *alaukika* and therefore those who possess the *sthāyī* may also experience *rasa.* This is to say that Rūpa has, in the case of *bhakti rasa*, practically eliminated the difference between the *sthāyī* and *rasa.*

One more peculiarity of Rūpa's *rasa* theory should be mentioned here. Since *kṛṣṇa-rati* is the essential element of the *bhakti-rasa* experience, Rūpa gives it greater emphasis than the classical aesthetic theorists did the *sthāyibhāvas* in their theory. For Rūpa, the *sthāyī* creates the *vibhāvas* and then is expanded and enriched by them. While the *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and

70. Jīva Gosvāmin, *Durgama-saṅgamanī* on B. r. s., 2. 5. 95.

vyabhicārīs are, according to the classical theory, intimately related to the *sthāyī*, they are not caused by the *sthāyī*. In the real world they are the causes, effects and accompanying emotions of the *sthāyī*. When portrayed in poetry or drama they become *vibhāvas*, etc. and set in motion processes of cognition which awaken dormant impressions in the mind relating to the appropriate *sthāyī*. It has not been argued that it is the *sthāyī* which empowers the *vibhāvas*, etc. to do such awakening nor that the *sthāyī* is the cause or source of the *vibhāvas*, etc. Rūpa says, however, that the *sthāyī* imparts to the appropriate objects their *vibhāva*-hood, etc. and thus brings itself to a state of enjoyment. This is possible because the *sthāyī* itself is present in the minds of the *bhaktas* and not just an impression of the *sthāyī*. The result is that since the *sthāyī* makes the appropriate objects into *vibhāvas*, etc. and the *sthāyī* is carried around in the heart of the *bhakta*, *rasa* can be experienced in any context. A person having direct experience of Kṛṣṇa and his *līlā* as a member of that *līlā* can also experience *rasa*. Here again Rūpa gives us his insight into the religious experience of Śrī Caitanya when in Purī he went running off madly into the ocean mistaking it for the River Yamunā. His *kṛṣṇa-rati* made the ocean into a *vibhāva*, the river of Kṛṣṇa, and thus the experience of the *rasa* of love-in-separation (*vipralambha*) was awakened in his heart. For him, the whole world became a potential *vibhāva* for *kṛṣṇa-rati*.

Therefore, we have arrived, after a long journey through the convoluted and complex world of theory, face to face with the practical world of religious feeling and experience. A more thorough treatment of this fascinating topic can provide some insight into the world of religious feeling and into how religious value becomes superimposed on the world of common experience. Perhaps a method of analysis based on Rūpa's efforts to analyze the religious experience of his great master can help us grasp some of the dynamics of religious feeling and experience in other religious traditions as well.

Abbreviations

A.p.	*Advaita-prakāśa*
Bhāg.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*
Bh.g.	*Bhagavad-gītā*
B.r.s.	*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*
C.bh.	*Caitanya-bhāgavata*
C.c.	*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*
C.c.m.k.	*Caitanya-caritāmṛta-mahā-kāvyam* (Kavi Karṇapūra)
C.c.n.	*Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭakam*
C.m.	*Caitanya-maṅgala*
G.g.d.	*Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*
G.l.	*Govinda-līlāmṛta*
G.p.t.	*Gaura-pada-taraṅgiṇī*
K.c.c.	*Kṛṣṇa-caitanya-caritāmṛtam* (Murāri Gupta)
K.p.	*Kāvya-prakāśa*
M.p.	*Muktāphala*
N.c.	*Nāṭaka-candrikā*
N.s.	*Nāṭya-śāstra*
P.k.t.	*Pada-kalpa-taru*
P.p.	*Padma Purāṇa*
R.r.s.	*Rādhā-rasa-sudhānidhi*
S.d.	*Sāhitya-darpaṇa*
Ś.p.	*Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa*
U.n.	*Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*
V.k.	*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*

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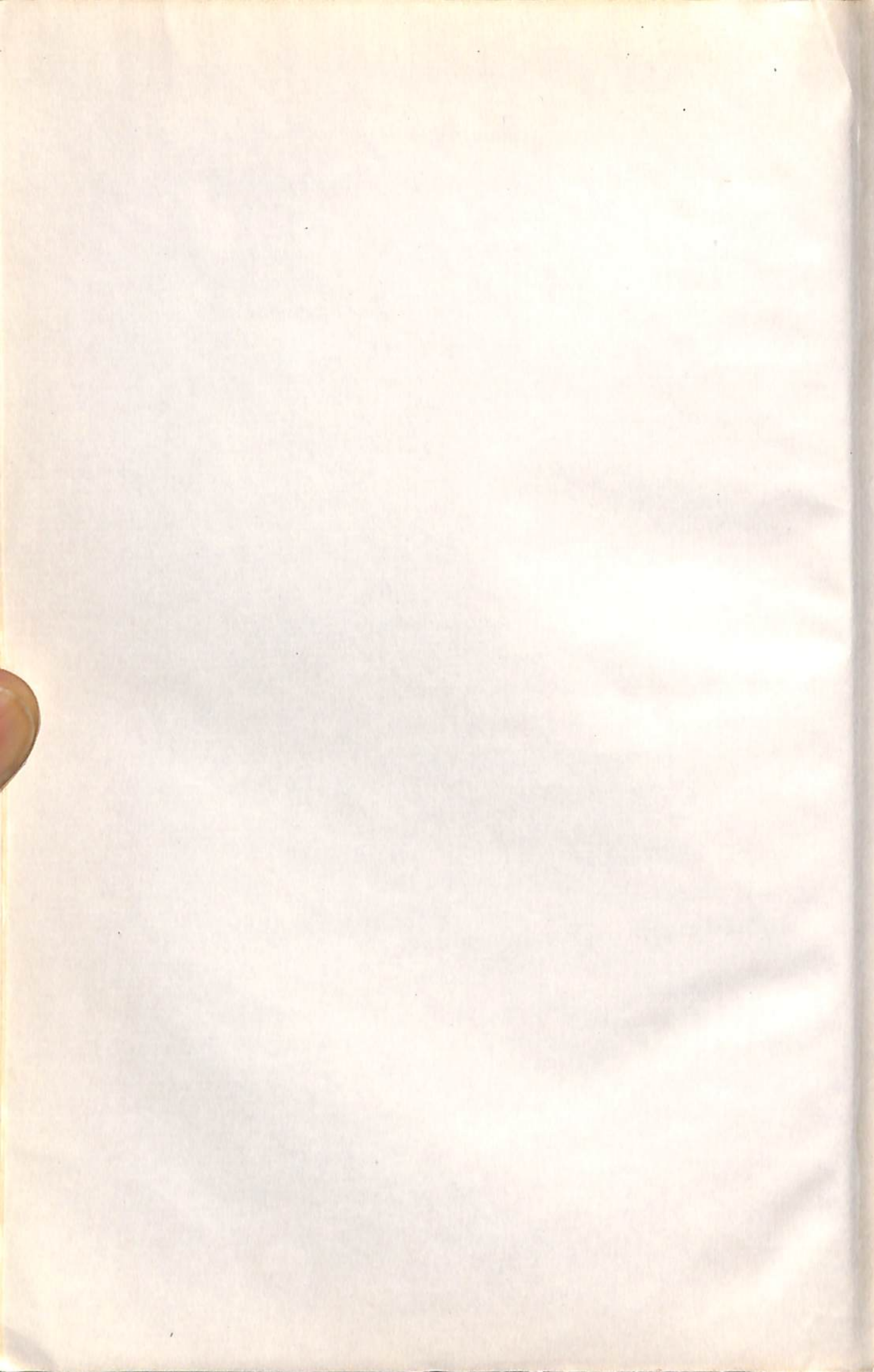
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the phenomenon of the spread of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism in the West. From another angle, the linguistic competency and erudition of the writers make the essays genuine contributions to a, as yet, sketchy understanding of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism not only in the West, but in India as well. Thus the essays also function as 'secondary' texts.

From the essays as a whole, however, emerges an idea which may be important to students of religion in general. This is the idea of the relationship of *sacred wonder* to religious experience. The experience of sacred wonder ties together all of these essays like the thread of a necklace or garland. The concept of sacred wonder shifts the focus of the study of religion away from the religious object, to the religious subject. Without confirming or denying the validity or existence of the religious object, one can still study the variables of this experience of wonder, called 'sacred' to distinguish it from other forms of wonder, as a function of the evolving life of the individual. In other words, the role of the individual not only in responding to but also in constituting the religious object can, through the concept of sacred wonder, become an object of study. Thus this book suggests an insight which may be potentially useful in the academic study of religion.

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